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ABSTRACT

This guide was prepared to assist administrators and staff of Independent Living Centers (ILC) to explore the feasibility of developing consumer-driven supported employment programs. An introduction and flow chart point out the relevant questions and milestones of the decision making and implementation process. Chapter 1 introduces the basics of supported employment, including descriptions of currently accepted practices, regulations, and statistics documenting the characteristics of supported employees and the jobs that they hold. Chapter 2 presents information that can help policy makers and administrators make a decision about providing supported employment services. It recommends the use of "force field analysis" in which forces promoting and forces discouraging the implementation of supported employment services are analyzed. Chapter 3 describes the various aspects of planning for the implementation of a supported employment program: the model(s) to offer, personnel requirements, and possible funding arrangements. Chapter 4 suggests an approach that incorporates supported employment activities into the usual flow of ILC activities. Chapter 5 details a method of self-evaluation of the quality of a supported employment program. Chapter 6 presents a list of resource centers and a bibliography. Attachments include: (1) booklets titled "Supported Employment and You," "Supported Employment for the Family and Others," and "Supported Employment and the Employer"; (2) 1986 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI, Part C on supported employment and Title VII, Part B on Centers for Independent Living; (3) standards for supported employment; and (4) a directory of state administrators of state vocational rehabilitation agencies. (JDD)

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NATIONAL MODEL
FOR
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND
INDEPENDENT LIVING

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER: IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

. . . Providing Employment Opportunities
for Persons with Disabilities

EC 300904

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September, 1991

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V. 1986 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII, Part B: Centers for Independent Living
VI. CARF Standards for Supported Employment
VII. Directory of State Administrators of State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, as of August 19, 1991

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In an effort to determine the accuracy and readability of the final document, a panel of reviewers read the document and suggested revisions each felt were appropriate. The incorporation of most of these suggestions has created a stronger document. Thanks go to: Mr. Luther Baker (Intern, The University of Texas at Austin), Mr. Charles Cotten (Executive Director, Dallas Center for Independent Living), Ms. Ricki Cook (former Supported Employment Director, North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), Mr. Jerry Doyle (Regional Representative, Rehabilitation Services Administration Region VI), Ms. Margo Nasjletti (Member of the Board of Directors, Central Illinois Center for Independent Living), Dr. Peg Nosek (Director of Research, Independent Living Research Utilization project of The Institute for Rehabilitation Research), Dr. Larry Rhodes (Associate Director of the Specialized Training Program, University of Oregon at Eugene), Mr. Ronald Rocha (Executive Director, Austin Resource Center for Independent Living), Dr. Carolyn Vash (Private Consultant), and Dr. Harold Viaille (Regional Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration Region VI).

FOREWORD

Supported employment became a new program initiative of the Rehabilitation Services Administration in response to persistent data indicating that approximately two-thirds of America's population with disabilities who wanted to work was not doing so. Further, data indicated that if you were severely disabled or happened to represent an ethnic or sexual minority group, your chances of being unemployed were significantly greater. Today, Supported Employment represents a way of realizing the hope of millions of Americans with severe disabilities who desire to work in their communities.

Community-based Independent Living Centers were created in recognition of the fact that many of America's citizens with disabilities were "falling through the cracks." Independent Living Centers, through strands of integrated activities that can range from peer counseling and independent living skills training to information/referral and community advocacy, strive to empower their consumers to more independently integrate and benefit from participation in their communities.

Supported employment represents a new pathway to greater independence and an improved quality of life for many. Independent Living Centers can enhance their ability to assist consumers with severe disabilities by becoming more informed about incorporating options that facilitate placements in competitive supported employment positions. Experience has shown that Centers can benefit by expanding and diversifying the funding streams of their organizations by providing supported employment services that are generally not available in adequate numbers in most communities.

Additionally, Independent Living Centers have an important advocacy role to play by assisting state vocational rehabilitation counselors and administrators in establishing supported employment programs that clearly designate the consumer as the individual responsible for expressing his/her employment-related desires and decisions. There is a need to assume a strong advocacy role for consumers with severe disabilities by serving as a concrete example in your community of how to deliver consumer-driven supported employment services. Independent Living Centers can contribute greatly to the development and demonstration of *consumer-driven supported employment* programs in their state.

Not becoming involved in supported employment programs in the community is becoming more and more difficult for a community-based Independent Living Center. For example, the Americans with Disabilities Act identifies supported employment as a *reasonable accommodation* by employers that will promote the hiring of qualified applicants with disabilities. Without a doubt more and more Americans will expect this type of assistance to be available to them. Independent Living Centers, whether involved in direct supported employment services or not, will find more of their consumers interested or involved in this type of employment assistance.

Recognizing increasing consumer demands for supported employment in the community and the potential benefits to the Independent Living Center from incorporation of a supported employment program, the implementation of a supported employment program should be carefully considered. The information provided in this *Implementation Guide* is intended to assist the Executive Director and Board of Directors in making the best informed choices possible that will lead to the development of a successful supported employment program for both the Center and the consumer.

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TO: CIL Directors

When the National Model for Supported Employment was presented as a viable option to assist consumers with severe disabilities, the Austin Resource Center for Independent Living (ARCIL) decided to enter into a joint effort with the Southwest Educational Developmental Lab to enhance service and activity options for it's participants.

ARCIL considered several factors before deciding to implement a Supported Employment service option into existing programming. Primary consideration focused on the philosophical compatibility of a Supported Employment model in an independent living self-empowerment environment. Review of the objectives revealed that Supported Employment could be a viable means to enhance self-empowerment for persons with severe disabilities.

Additional consideration in the decision making process were; consistency with the agency's mission and insuring the consumer perspective. ARCIL's mission is "to contribute toward improvements in the condition and circumstances of disabled individuals, by contributing to the systematic development of, and constant improvements in, the attitudes, resources, methodologies and opportunities that this population requires in order to live more independently and productively." Consumer control was essential in any activity provided through the center. The National Model for Supported Employment insured that the locus of control rested with the consumer and promoted community integration for persons with severe disabilities. The promotion of informed options, developed under Job Club activities, assisted the consumer in making informed choices.

Prior to the advent of Supported Employment, the center was providing traditional employment services to it's consumers. The services provided were; employment skills classes, employment counseling and job search assistance. Traditional employment activities were not always sufficient, given the severity and diversity of disabilities. Implementation of a Supported Employment program evolved as a natural complement to employment services.

Fee for service contractual obligations prompted the agency to develop a more sophisticated accounting system in order to track multiple funding streams. The center also became proficient in measuring the effectiveness and provision of services and encouraging interdepartmental cooperation. ARCIL gained a higher visibility and appreciated the value of marketing and advertising it's services in the community.

Currently, Supported Employment is the mainstay of employment service options available at ARCIL. The department is operated on a fee for service basis, supporting one full-time coordinator and six contractual job coaches. Of the thirty-eight consumers open in supported employment; seven are receiving job coaching assistance, twenty-three are receiving job search or employment evaluation assistance and eight are in continued support status.

Transition into the community continues to be promoted through the placement of persons with disabilities in integrated community employment settings. Supported Employment demonstrates it's ability to sustain itself as a viable service option in this regard.

Ronald Rocha

Ronald Rocha
Executive Director
Austin Resource Center
for Independent Living, Inc.

Introduction

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The *Implementation Guide* is designed to assist an Independent Living Center (ILC) Board of Directors, Executive Director (ED), and staff explore the feasibility of offering supported employment services within the ILC. To promote a thorough examination of the factors related to this issue, this manual provides information that will help these individuals:

- learn about supported employment
- make an informed decision about an appropriate level of involvement in supported employment
- plan for implementation of supported employment services
- determine the basic structure of supported employment services within the ILC

There are many questions that must be answered to arrive at a decision to offer or not offer supported employment. The ILC that decides to offer a supported employment program also has decisions to make concerning the implementation of that program. The flow chart at the end of this Introduction illustrates the relevant questions and milestones of this process. Each chapter of the *Implementation Guide* presents information that facilitates progress along the flow of decision-making activities.

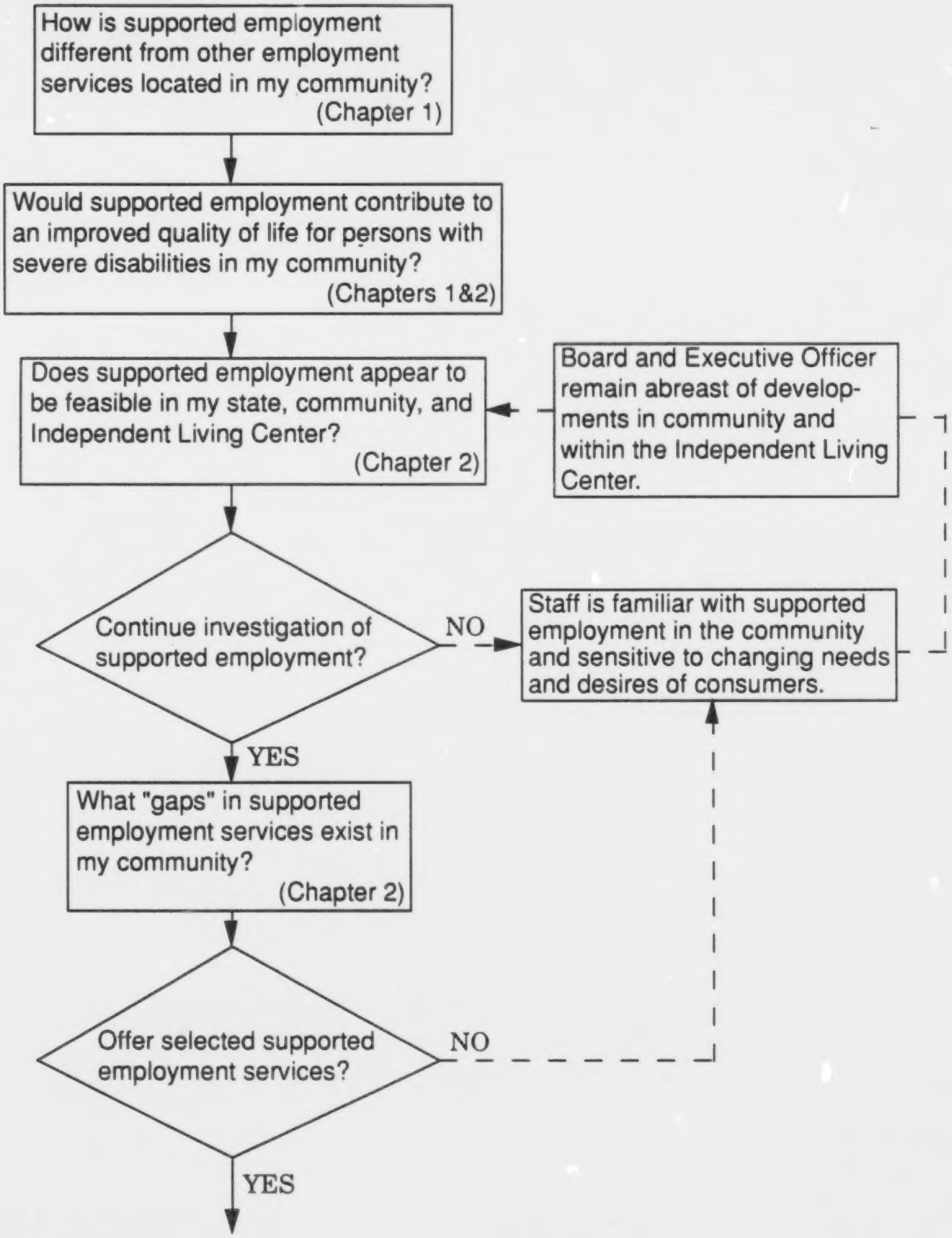
Chapter I introduces the basics of supported employment including descriptions of currently accepted practices, regulations, and statistics documenting the characteristics of supported employees and the jobs that they hold. An important section of Chapter I describes a "consumer-driven" approach to supported employment that is promoted throughout the rest of the manual. In fact, supported employment as described in this manual *is* consumer-driven.

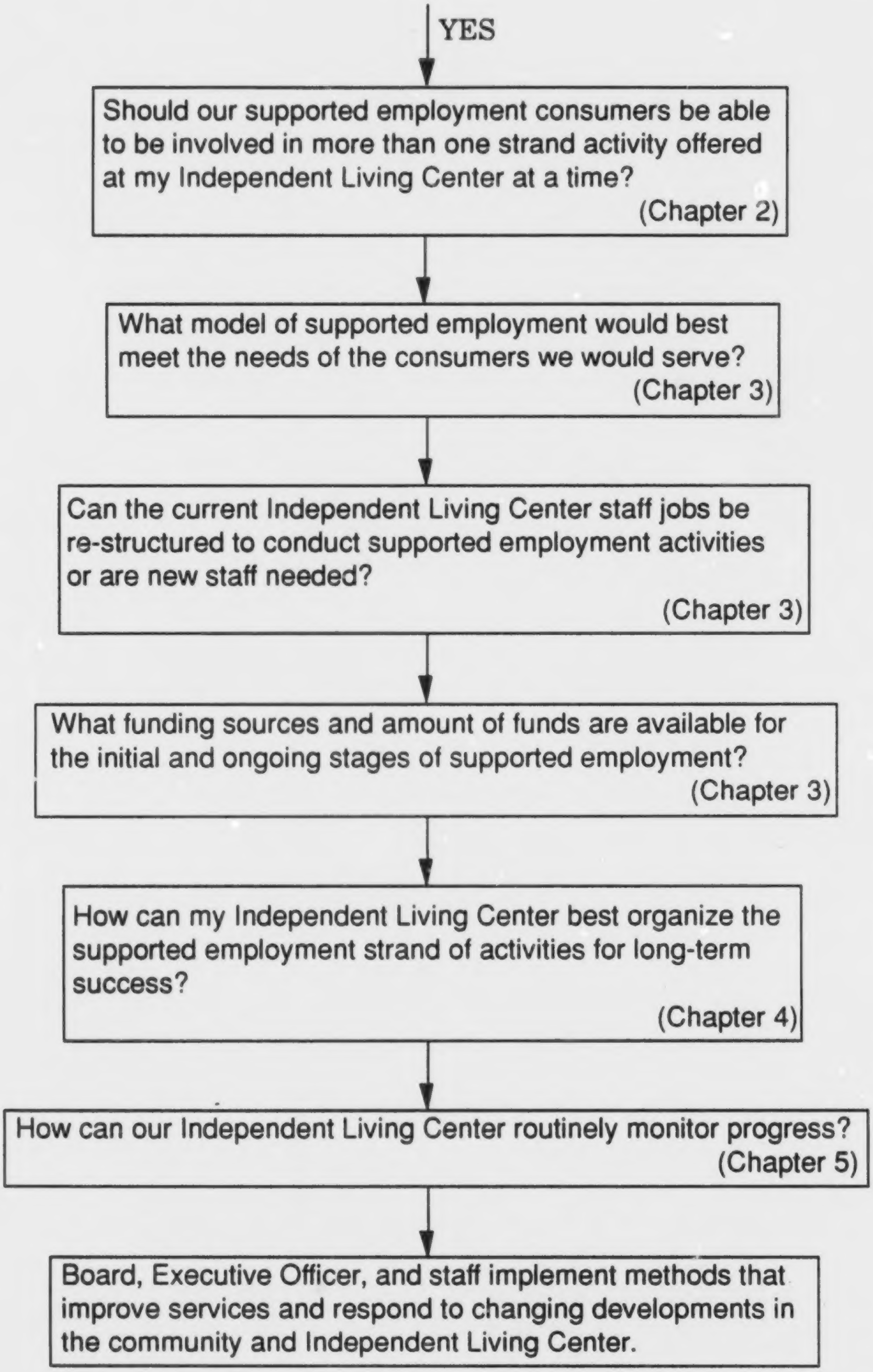
Chapter 2 presents information that can help a Board of Directors and the ED make a decision about providing supported employment services at their ILC. As a Board and ED begin this process, we suggest the use of a technique called "Force Field Analysis" to provide some structure to the procedure. In using this technique, each individual determines the forces that he/she feels *promote* the implementation of supported employment within the community and the ILC, along with the forces that *discourage* the implementation of supported employment services. Forces that have been commonly identified (either as *promoting* or *discouraging*) include funding, transportation, business/economic conditions, staffing, the employment status of people with disabilities, the compatibility of supported employment and independent living concepts, and the role of supported employment in community advocacy efforts. Chapter 2 presents material on each of these topics in order to help a Board of Directors and ED analyze their "forces." The final sections of Chapter 2 suggest ways to determine the need in the community for selected supported employment services and to organize supported employment services within the ILC.

Chapter 3 describes the various aspects of planning for the implementation of a supported employment program: the model(s) to offer, personnel requirements, and possible funding arrangements. Chapter 4 suggests an ILC activity flow that incorporates supported employment activities into the usual flow of ILC activities. Chapter 5 details a method of self-evaluation of the quality of a supported employment program. Chapter 6 presents a resource list and a bibliography.

Each chapter and each section are meant to serve as discrete units of information as well as part of the whole document. That is, the content of each chapter and section is not necessarily dependent on information presented in previous sections and chapters. For this reason, there is some repetition of information throughout the manual. However, we've taken this approach so that persons with different levels of knowledge and/or purposes can access specific information in a quick and concise manner. At the end of many sections are support documents (e.g, charts, tables) that supplement or summarize the information in the text.

DECISION TREE FOR BOARDS AND DIRECTORS


How is supported employment different from other employment services located in my community? (Chapter 1)
Would supported employment contribute to an improved quality of life for persons with severe disabilities in my community? (Chapters 1&2)
Does supported employment appear to be feasible in my state, community, and Independent Living Center? (Chapter 2)
Board and Executive Officer remain abreast of developments in community and within the Independent Living Center.
Continue investigation of supported employment?
NO
Staff is familiar with supported employment in the community and sensitive to changing needs and desires of consumers.
YES
What "gaps" in supported employment services exist in my community? (Chapter 2)
Offer selected supported employment services?
NO
YES



Should our supported employment consumers be able to be involved in more than one strand activity offered at my Independent Living Center at a time? (Chapter 2)

What model of supported employment would best meet the needs of the consumers we would serve? (Chapter 3)

Can the current Independent Living Center staff jobs be re-structured to conduct supported employment activities or are new staff needed? (Chapter 3)

What funding sources and amount of funds are available for the initial and ongoing stages of supported employment? (Chapter 3)

How can my Independent Living Center best organize the supported employment strand of activities for long-term success? (Chapter 4)

How can our Independent Living Center routinely monitor progress? (Chapter 5)

Board, Executive Officer, and staff implement methods that improve services and respond to changing developments in the community and Independent Living Center.

Chapter 1

An Overview of Supported Employment

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Summary

To fill a gap in employment-related services for persons with severe disabilities, supported employment became a federally supported vocational program for persons with severe disabilities.

Major Points

- In the early-to-mid 1980s, studies by the federal government's Office Of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) indicated that many individuals with severe disabilities were not receiving services that would enable them to move successfully from school to work.
- OSERS developed initiatives that encouraged state agencies to shift their emphasis from the service models of day programming and sheltered workshops to supported employment.
- The 1986 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 authorized funds to be used for supported employment services and made it a service available from every state vocational rehabilitation agency.
- Supported employment is a vocational assistance option for students leaving school, and an employment alternative for adults with severe disabilities who have intermittent work histories and/or who require ongoing services to maintain employment.

Discussion

In 1984, Madeleine Will, Assistant Secretary of OSERS, described the concept of supported employment. She and her staff recognized that the transition from school to working life for most persons with disabilities was unsuccessful. At the time many adults with severe disabilities were working in sheltered workshops, participating in day programming activities to "ready" them for work, or simply remaining at home. Frequently, these individuals were forced to rely on undependable community services. Given these circumstances, many persons with severe disabilities felt a sense of frustration and helplessness. In response to these findings, OSERS set forth new policies to focus on successful transition to employment for all students with disabilities.

In order to provide a framework to consider this issue, Ms. Will described three types of transition from school to work for students with disabilities:

> ***Unassisted transition.*** Some individuals with disabilities move from school to work using only those services and resources generally available to all students.
>
> ***Time-limited support for transition.*** Other individuals with disabilities obtain competitive work after the termination of brief vocational training, job counseling and referral, or other short-term time-limited services traditionally provided through state vocational agencies.
>
> ***Ongoing support for transition.*** Individuals with severe disabilities obtain and maintain employment with the provision of continuing services in the form of on-the-job training, placement programs, and long-term support (on and off the job site).
>
> (Will, 1984)

OSERS found that continuing services (on-the-job training, housing and transportation assistance, advocacy, etc.) for persons with severe disabilities were inadequate and set about to make needed changes in policy and authorized services. OSERS developed a supported employment initiative that offered state agencies competitive grants to shift their emphasis from day programming and sheltered workshops to supported employment in order to enable individuals with severe disabilities to maintain community-based mainstream employment.

Supported employment took its place in vocational rehabilitation counseling with the passage of the 1986 Amendments to the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These amendments, for the first time, authorized monies specifically for supported employment services. The Amendments, especially that creating Title VI, Part C, placed the initial phase of supported employment under the jurisdiction of vocational rehabilitation; states would receive these funds as they did other formula-derived vocational rehabilitation monies.

Summary

Supported employment represents a major departure from the more traditional programs for persons with severe disabilities.

Major Points

- Supported employment provides an individual with severe disabilities:
    - a job placement in the community
    - on-the-job training
    - a competitive wage, or a wage based on productivity
    - opportunities for interaction with non-disabled individuals
    - ongoing assistance necessary to maintain his/her job
- These attributes of supported employment distinguish it from sheltered workshop and day programming services.

Discussion

Traditionally, vocational rehabilitation models use a "train/place" approach; individuals who are considered capable of independent competitive employment are provided a time-limited amount of training and assistance in locating a job. After job placement, they are then expected to independently maintain their employment. This service delivery model is based on two major underlying assumptions:

- Behaviors are learned according to a developmental sequence. Therefore, higher level behaviors can only be acquired when prerequisites have been mastered.

- Behaviors learned in one setting can be easily generalized to another.

(Twelfth Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, 1985)

For persons with severe disabilities, the "train/place" model has resulted in two primary types of service. Some individuals are placed in sheltered workshop settings where they engage in developmentally appropriate "work" activities, have limited interaction with non-disabled people other than their caregivers, and usually receive less than competitive wages. As these workshops are often dependent on obtaining contracts, the availability of this work activity can be unstable. Other individuals, who do not qualify for sheltered workshop placement, may participate in day programming activities that focus on behaviors considered prerequisite to employment, i.e., daily living skills, social skills, and others indirectly related to employment. Many persons with severe disabilities do not move from sheltered workshops or day programs to community-based integrated employment. Rather, these "alternatives-to-work" often become their long-term daily life activities. (Will, 1984)

Supported employment utilizes a "place/train" approach and is based on a different set of assumptions. Research has shown that the assumptions of the "train/place model" are not universally true. The assumptions of the "place/train" model include:

- Many complex behaviors can be taught through an individualized plan, using task and behavioral analysis. Therefore, persons can be trained to perform specific tasks without necessarily mastering all of the "prerequisites."

- Behaviors are best learned in the environment in which they will be used.

- It is difficult for persons with severe disabilities to generalize behaviors from one setting to another.

(Twelfth Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, 1985)

In a supported employment program, individuals with severe disabilities are placed in integrated work environment in which they are expected to perform, taught to do their job in that environment, provided ongoing services to help them maintain the job, and paid an appropriate wage for their work. Supported employment recognizes that persons with severe disabilities often demonstrate vocational needs that can be met successfully through the provision of on-the-job training and long-term support services. Supported employment promotes the ability of individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment.

Characteristics of Approach	Traditional Model "Train/Place"	Supported Employment Model "Place/Train"
Types of Programs	Day programs, work activity programs, sheltered workshops, treatment, therapy	Supported employment in any occupational area
Short-Term Goals	Stabilize individual in training setting, prepare to move to next step	Maintain paid employment in a regular job setting
Long-Term Goals	Develop skills that will result in employment	Increase earnings, enhance career potential, improve quality of physical and social integration
Level of Support, Instruction, Intervention	Relatively constant supervision delivered equally to all regardless of need	Intensive initially, decreasing over time to stable minimum, flexible, amount determined by individual need
Non-Vocational Skills	Frequently taught as pre-requisites to employment	Taught along with vocational skills in relevant work environments
Wage Opportunities	Non-existent or piece rate, usually well below minimum wage, may not be based on productivity or performance	Commensurate with other wage earners performing similar work; quantity and quality is achieved
Opportunities for integration with Non-Disabled	Limited	Emphasized; planned for if necessary

[Taken from Twelfth Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, 1985]

Summary

Through the development of demonstration programs, federal legislation, and determination of best practices in supported employment, a commonly accepted, outcome-based definition of supported employment has emerged.

Major Points

- According to current federal legislation, the five critical characteristics of supported employment are:
    - It is appropriate for persons with severe disabilities who cannot maintain employment without ongoing (job-long) services and/or who have intermittent work histories.
    - Paid work is performed in the same environment in which non-disabled workers perform the same work functions, i.e., an integrated environment with the same routine, working hours, etc., as other workers.
    - The job performed constitutes real paid employment, i.e., it is stable (not seasonal), and occurs for at least 20 hours per week (on average) per pay period.
    - Wages paid are based upon the individual worker's ability to perform a service or produce a product.
    - The provision of ongoing support services will vary, depending upon the needs of the individual, and will be provided at least two times per month on the job site, except for persons with long-term mental illness. Individuals with long-term mental illness can receive their required ongoing support services off the job site.

Discussion

Title VI, Part C of the 1986 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 established these criteria for supported employment. To clarify the criteria, federal regulations define an "integrated work setting" as one in which a maximum of eight persons with disabilities are employed, and in which regular contact with non-disabled individuals is possible. Programs meeting these criteria are appropriate for supported employment funds from the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

WHO PARTICIPATES AND IN WHAT JOBS

Summary

Though supported employment programs have historically tended to serve certain disability groups in limited occupational alternatives, the intent of supported employment is to provide paid work in a variety of occupational settings for individuals with a variety of severe disabilities.

Major Points

- Supported employment is for individuals who, due to their severe disability, have been unable to secure and/or maintain paid work. These individuals can exhibit a range of disabilities that include profound, severe, moderate retardation; long-term mental illness; sensory impairments, e.g., visual impairment, hearing impairment; autism; learning disabilities; traumatic brain injury; cerebral palsy and other neurological disabilities; physical disabilities; other health impairments; and, multiple disabilities, e.g., deaf-blindness.

- Individuals in supported employment are required to work in regular business environments. Therefore, the potential options for employment are limited only by the business and industry located in a particular area.

- Supported employees should work a minimum of 20 hours per week, and receive a wage commensurate with others doing the same work.

- Studies of supported employment in practice in Fiscal Year 1988, as reported to the U.S. Congress by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), show that:

    - The number of individuals served through supported employment in the U.S. tripled from 1986 to 1988 (from 9,876 in FY 1986 to 32,342 in FY 1988).

- Seventy percent of these were individuals with mental retardation while 16.7% were people with long-term mental illness.

- Approximately 57% of supported employment placements were in the cleaning/custodial and food service categories.

- Approximately 25% of those in supported employment positions worked less than 20 hours per week.

- The average hourly wage for all participants was $3.13.

Discussion

The impact of the OSERS initiative in supported employment and the 1986 Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 can be seen in the increasing numbers of individuals participating in supported employment. It seems safe to project that this trend will continue and may accelerate because of supported employment's increasing acceptance as a viable option for persons with severe disabilities and its inclusion as a "reasonable accommodation" in the regulations implementing Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The figures on the following pages provide more detailed information about supported employment in Fiscal Year 1988 (data gathered by Virginia Commonwealth University) and illustrate the following:

- Individuals with the most severe or profound disabilities did not benefit significantly from supported employment services.

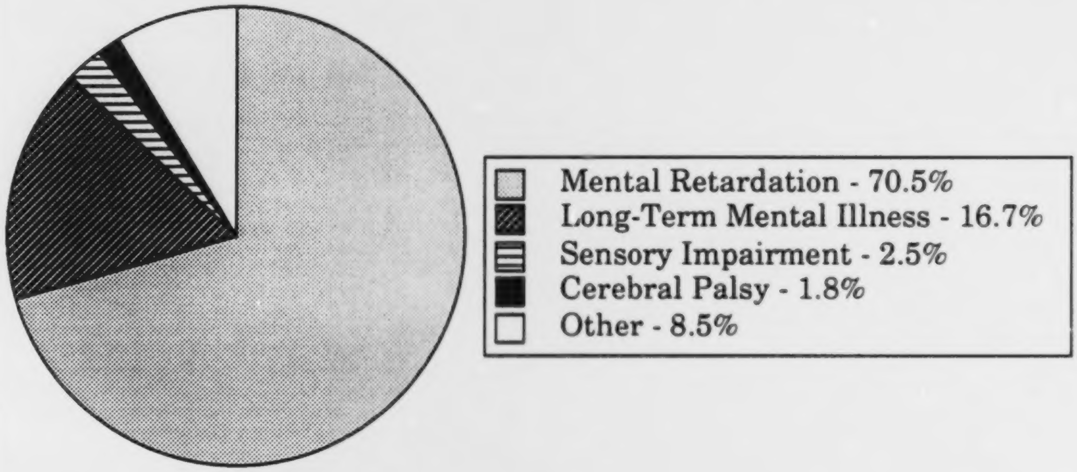
- The majority of all persons in supported employment programs are placed in custodial and food service positions. These individuals may be choosing these settings for various reasons (e.g., their friends work there, they like the uniforms, they like to eat there) or they may be placed in these positions by vocational rehabilitation counselors using a "skills-available job match" strategy.

- Almost 25% of supported employees worked less than 20 hours per week. This level of employment does not adhere to the federal definition of supported employment.

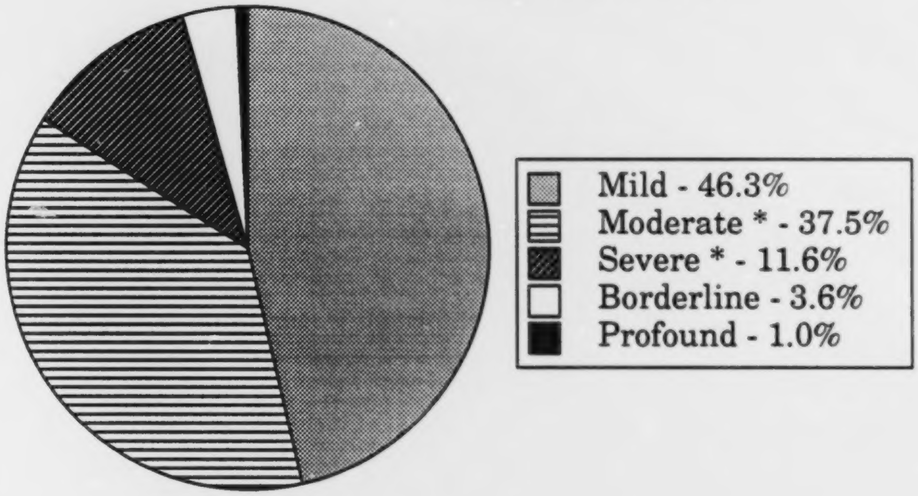
In order to be more effective, supported employment programs need to: (1) emphasize supported employment for persons with the most severe disabilities, (2) expand and develop employment opportunities based on consumer preferences and interests, and (3) assist individuals to increase the number of hours worked as needed or desired.

Primary Disability of Participants in Supported Employment Fiscal Year 1988

N=25,383 **45 States Reporting**

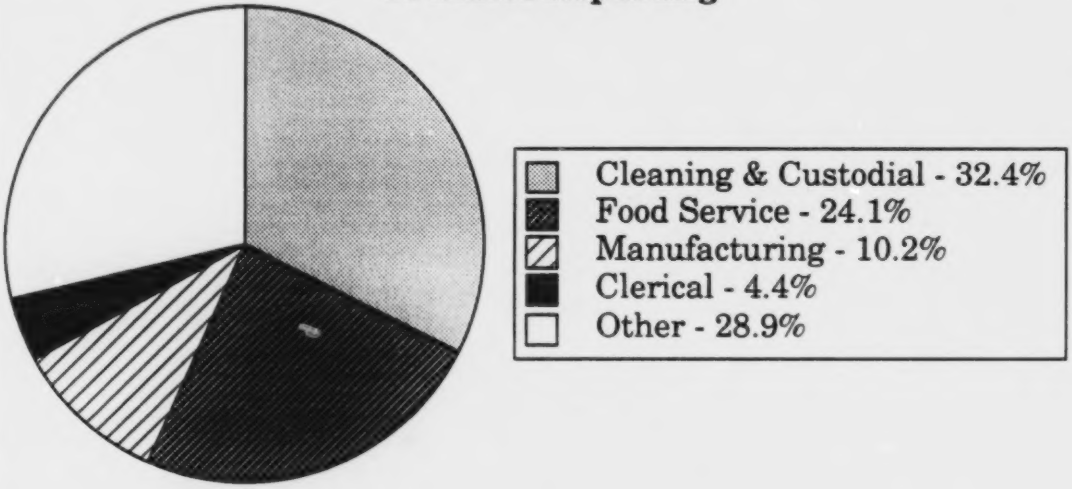


Levels of Mental Functioning for Participants with Mental Retardation Fiscal Year 1988 45 States Reporting

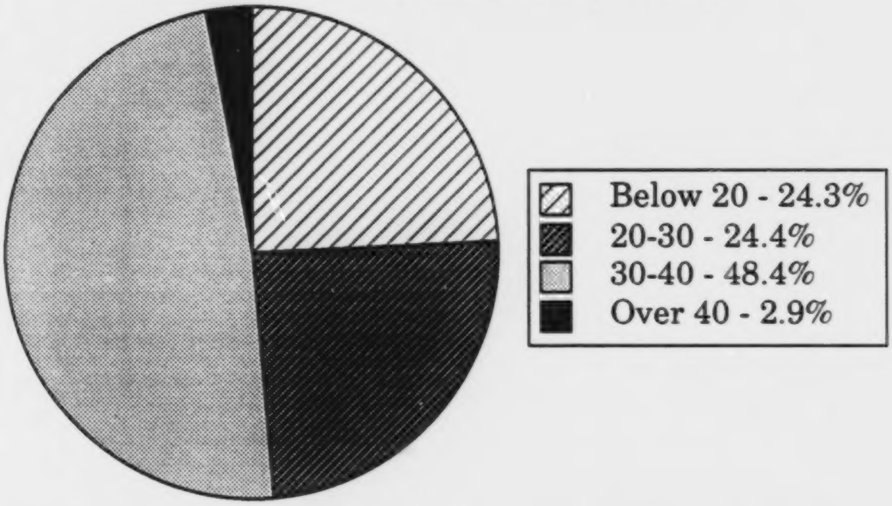


*** In the Title I VR Services program, individuals with moderate or severe mental retardation are classified as severely disabled.**

Job Placements
Fiscal Year 1988
35 States Reporting



Average Weekly Hours of Employment
Fiscal Year 1988
27 States Reporting



The four charts were taken from the "1989 Report to Congress: Supported Employment Activities Under Section 311(d) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended." Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. Primary data were gathered by Virginia Commonwealth University.

Summary

Supported employment utilizes four models to place persons in supported employment settings and provides a range of services to stabilize and maintain individuals in those environments.

Major Points

- The four models of supported employment that can be used to provide employment and related support services necessary to assist persons with severe disabilities to maintain employment in an integrated setting are:

    1) The ***Individual Placement Model***, sometimes known as the "Job Coach Model," develops and provides employment opportunities for individuals in local business/industry on primarily a one person-one job basis.

    2) The ***Enclave Model*** employs a small group of persons with severe disabilities (usually eight or less) in a community-based business or industry and provides full integration with non-disabled workers.

    3) The ***Mobile Work Crew Model*** employs a small group (usually from 3 to 8) of persons with disabilities as a job crew to perform available jobs on a contract basis.

    4) The ***Entrepreneurial Model***, sometimes thought of as the "Small Business Approach," utilizes commercial business enterprises that establish persons with disabilities as the owners of a business that offers a service and/or produces a product.

- In supported employment placements consumers are provided intensive, time-limited services until they are stable in the employment position. Typical services can include assessment; job development, job placement, on-the-job training and advocacy; job performance assessment, feedback, and intervention as necessary; and, other services that relate to successful job performance.

- Once stabilization on the job has occurred, an individualized set of ongoing support services must be provided for as long as the person occupies the position. On-the-job observation/retraining must occur at least twice monthly. (For persons with long-term mental illness this requirement can be offered at an off-site location.) Other support services that could assist the individual in maintaining long-term employment include: intake to determine rehabilitation needs; referral, assistance, and/or counseling for attendant care; advocacy concerning legal/economic rights; assistance/referral for housing, transportation, recreation; health maintenance program; education/training to live and participate in the community.

- A major distinction between intensive, time-limited services and ongoing services is the availability of funding from state vocational rehabilitation agencies: they fund only intensive, time-limited services for a specified period of time that can not exceed 18 months.

Discussion

In the ***Individual Placement Model,*** a trained Job Coach develops a job in the local business/industry, matches an individual to the job, trains the individual in an on-the-job setting until specified job performance criteria have been met, and continues to provide a variety of ongoing follow-up support services to the individual as long as necessary to ensure job maintenance.

In the ***Enclave Model***, six to eight workers will be supervised by a trained specialist employed, at least initially, by the supported employment program. Additional management and supervision is provided by the host company, as would occur with any other employee.

Enclave employees are paid wages which are commensurate with wages paid to other persons within the host company doing the same amount and type of work. Typically, enclave members work as a group alongside non-disabled co-workers doing the same work.

The ***Mobile Work Crew Model*** is a versatile, relatively more flexible option which may be more appropriate for implementation in communities where a wide range of work opportunities in business/industry is not readily available. A non-profit organization generally provides work crew employees the necessary onsite training, ongoing supervision and feedback, transportation, and required equipment and supplies. Wages paid are commensurate with the prevailing community wage for similar types of work. Because of the relative lack of opportunities for integration and interaction with non-disabled individuals usually associated with this model, opportunities for integration may be provided through scheduled breaks or meal times, hiring of non-disabled work crew members, or other special activities.

The ***Entrepreneurial Model*** can be adapted for implementation in either an urban or rural context due to its responsiveness to local business needs and opportunities. Particularly in those rural settings in which a wide variety of employment opportunities may not exist naturally, this model offers a viable means of creating them. It has been said that this model forces the person with a disability to interact with the public thereby creating integration opportunities.

The figures on the following pages illustrate the following facts concerning supported employment in Fiscal Year 1988 (RSA, 1989):

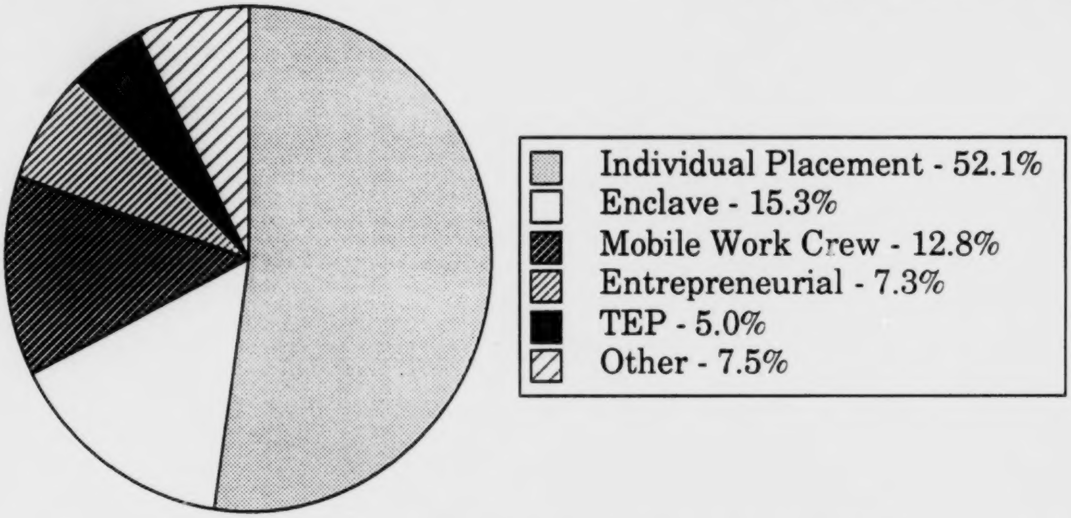
(1) About one half of those in supported employment participated in the individual placement model. The next most widely used approach was the enclave. These options are used in 70% of all supported employment placements.

(2) The highest average wage ($3.91 per hour) was earned by individuals in the individual placement model. On average, wages in the three other models were comparable with each other but below minimum wage. The minimum wage in 1988 was $3.35 per hour.

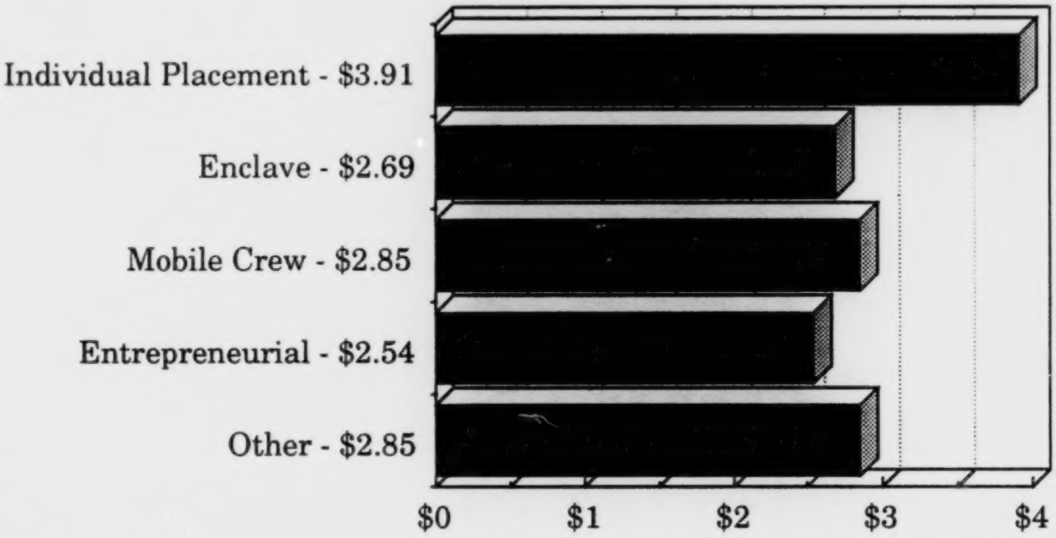
[Much of the information for this section was obtained from the Twelfth Institute on Rehabilitation Issues. (1985). *Supported employment: Issues for rehabilitation services*. Fayetteville, AR: Arkansas Research & Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation, University of Arkansas.]

Supported Employment Model Utilization
Fiscal Year 1988

N=25,109 **41 States Reporting**



Comparative Hourly Wage Rates by Model
Fiscal Year 1988
27 States Reporting



Taken from "The 1989 Annual Report to Congress Supported Employment Activities Under Section 311(d) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended." Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. Primary data were gathered by Virginia Commonwealth University.

General Characteristics of the Four Models of Supported Employment

Models Characteristics	Individual Placement	Enclave	Mobile Work Crew	Entrepreneurial
Types of Programs	Individual employed in regular job in business/industry	3-8 workers employed in the same business/ industry	3-8 workers employed in small group by non-profit agency to provide services on a contractual basis to business/industry	1-15 workers employed in small business owned by person(s) with disabilities
Job Duties	Varies according to placement	Usually manufacturing	groundskeeping, custodial, maintenance	Manufacturing, merchandising, service
Training	Provided one on one by employment advocate	Provided in group setting by employment advocate	Provided in group setting by employment advocate	Provided in group setting by employment advocate
Ongoing Supervision	Employee(s) of business/industry	Employee(s) of business/ industry	Permanent employment advocate	Permanent employment advocate
Wages	Usually, at or above minimum wage, based on job duties	Commensurate with others doing same work, can be sub-minimum wage	Commensurate with others doing same work, can be sub-minimum wage	Commensurate with others doing same work, can be sub-minimum wage
Opportunities for Integration	Exist naturally	Enclave members usually work alongside others performing same work	Limited; must be planned via break times, mealtimes, special activities	Exist naturally; small business must employ non-disabled workers

Summary

In order to enhance the success of persons with severe disabilities in supported employment, consumers must be actively involved in all decision-making steps of the supported employment process.

Major Points

- The general steps in the supported employment process are:
    1. Initial assessment of the individual in relation to employment
    2. Development of an Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan
    3. Job placement
    4. On-the-job training
    5. Ongoing support
    6. Periodic assessment

(Buckley *et al.*, 1988)

- Generally, supported employment programs do not involve consumers in these steps as much as they could; this fact may be contributing significantly to the lack of retention of employment of some individuals with severe disabilities.
- Supported employment is based upon an assumption that "the placement" will continue long-term. To reinforce this, traditionally supported employment requirements to provide ongoing services terminate when an individual leaves his/her job.

- Increasing the "consumer-driven" nature of supported employment programs can increase the level of success of their participants.

Discussion

Data collected to monitor the supported employment program's success with people with severe disabilities indicate that:

(a) Those persons typically being served by supported employment service providers may not as a whole be as severely disabled as the original concept of supported employment described.

(b) Over 50 percent of those going into a supported employment job are placed in food service or janitorial types of work.

Conceptually, supported employment has been described as a "place/train" model, rather than the more traditional vocational rehabilitation model of "train/place." While this type of descriptor may help distinguish supported employment in the mind of the traditional rehabilitation counselor, it has led to uncertain applications of the supported employment concept by some service providers. Many service providers have literally interpreted the "place/train" concept to mean that the first activity - once an individual is referred by an agency- is to place the consumer in a supported employment job and begin providing intensive services in the form of training at the employment site.

Some supported employment service providers tend not to pay as much attention to consumer likes, dislikes, and goals for employment as they should. The consumer's current level of skill and work history should not be the only factors used to "match" the individual with a suitable job. Professionals should involve consumers in a planning process that will insure that the consumer has enough information to make an informed decision about his/her supported employment job preference. After all, if the job is to be maintained for a long period of time, consumer enjoyment of the job and the work environment is necessary.

On-the-job training associated with supported employment must be provided in a fashion that over time "fades" from the work environment at a rate that allows the worker to continue meeting job standards. An inflexible schedule of "fading" can not benefit supported employees. Ongoing support should emphasize job maintenance as well as assist the supported employee to prepare for increased job responsibilities, pay, etc.

All individuals have the right to make active choices about employment and the ways in which they can obtain and maintain that employment. Persons with severe disabilities are no different. Consumers of supported employment services must actively participate in all phases of the process if their employment is to be successful and satisfying. It is important to remember that the traditional ways of providing vocational assistance to consumers with severe disabilities may need to be reconsidered when providing supported employment services. By insisting on the active participation of the consumer in all phases of the supported employment process, supported employment service providers should increase the probability of long-term maintenance of the supported employment job.

The steps of the supported employment process (initial assessment, planning, job placement, training, ongoing support, and periodic assessment) can be used as a "starting point" to determine how modifications could be made that would make the current supported employment service system more "consumer-sensitive." The table on the following page illustrates some areas that can reflect varying degrees of consumer input and direction. (Westbrook & Lumbley, 1990).

Less Consumer-Directed Supported Employment	More "Consumer-Driven" Supported Employment
INITIAL ASSESSMENT	
Documentation of work history	Determination of desired type(s) of employment
Identification of occupational skills	Determination of desired work characteristics
Determination of previous service record	Identification of consumer needs to address in order to obtain desired employment
PLAN DEVELOPMENT	
Professional develops plan	Joint planning process is used Other resources/accomplishments identified with consumer
Consumer is informed of best outcomefor him/her	Agreement on "strategy" for goal-attainment
Limited alternatives are discussed	Family support discussed/defined
JOB PLACEMENT	
Placement occurs after service provider "matching"	Jobs developed in response to consumer's goals for employment
Available job forces selection of available consumer to fill job	Consumer's likes, dislikes, and goals drive the selection of a placement

Less Consumer-Directed Supported Employment	More "Consumer-Driven" Supported Employment
TRAINING	
Pre-planned timetable for the end of on-the-job training	On-the-job training provided for longer period of time based on consumer needs/ desires
Concern with job skill development	Concern with job skill development and shaping the work environment
Closure near the six-month interval	Closure near the end of the eighteen-month interval
ONGOING SUPPORT	
Ongoing support attempts to meet intensive training/re-training needs	Ongoing support involves training/ re-training as needed, plus preparation for another job with more responsibility and higher pay
More perfunctory	More functional
PERIODIC ASSESSMENT	
Assessment occurs over six-month period from date of placement	Assessment occurs for 18-24 month period after placement

Summary

Supported employment offers a range of financial, social, and personal benefits to persons with severe disabilities.

Major Points

- Benefits to participants in supported employment can include:
    - increased earnings and the opportunity to contribute to the community by paying taxes
    - enhanced self-esteem
    - increased freedom and independence
    - opportunities to make new friends, particularly people without disabilities
    - exposure to new role models
    - increased community integration
- These benefits tend to accrue to individuals who have actively participated in all phases of the supported employment process.

Discussion

In this society, participating in paid employment is an important aspect of an independent life style. Through supported employment persons with severe disabilities can obtain the same benefits as other people who work in this society. In fact, these benefits may be intensified due to these individuals' past work and educational histories. Because of the nature of supported employment, individuals who were considered by some to be unlikely candidates for competitive employment can become productive, contributing members of society. In addition, community-based employment provides persons with severe disabilities an opportunity to interact and form relationships with non-disabled co-workers and other employed persons with disabilities. This on-the-job integration can go far to increase the integration of persons with severe disabilities within the local community at large.

In a study conducted by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center at Virginia Commonwealth University, participants in supported employment were compared with participants in sheltered workshops. Supported employees were found to:

- appear healthier and make more health improvements after placement than those in day programs

- be better off financially and in more control of their finances than persons in sheltered workshops

- make more independent use of community facilities (public transportation, recreation facilities, fast food restaurants, etc.)

(*Competitive Employment*, Vol.3, No.2)

However, the benefits of supported employment may not be acquired if the individual is placed in a job that is not satisfying to him/her. Job satisfaction requires that the individual expressed a desire for a particular employment position and receives appropriate training and support to secure and maintain it. Job satisfaction implies the perception of opportunity and means for advancement in job responsibilities, wages, and benefits. Job satisfaction is related to the pursuit of personal goals. This suggests that those individuals in supported employment programs who have exercised choice and control in the planning, implementation, and ongoing phases of supported employment will be more likely to achieve job-related success and its attendant benefits.

Chapter 2

Deciding How to Get Involved

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Summary

Statistics representing the employment status of individuals with disabilities indicate the need for expansion of the traditional vocational rehabilitation options, to include supported employment.

Major Points

- Two-thirds of Americans with disabilities expressing a desire to work are unemployed (Will, 1984; U.S. Office of Civil Rights, 1983).
- Four out of five women with disabilities are unemployed (NARF, 1987; Harris, 1986).
- Approximately 60 percent of adults with disabilities who are of working age are at or near the poverty line (Lagomarcino, 1990).
- Federal programs for people with disabilities tend to overemphasize income support and underemphasize equal opportunity, independence, prevention, and self-sufficiency (National Council on the Handicapped, 1988).
- Fewer than 15 percent of those exiting special education programs in America's high schools were participating in postsecondary education and training one year after graduation (Wagner, 1989), compared to 56 percent of those with no disabilities (Jones, 1986).
- Many graduates with disabilities exiting America's public schools are not adequately prepared for employment and are unable to access resources that enhance participation in community life (National Council on Disability, 1989).

- Approximately 1.6 million persons receive services annually from over 5,500 sheltered workshops and 2,000 activity centers (Parent, 1990).
- Only 7 percent of individuals in adult activity centers and 12 percent of those in sheltered workshops move into competitive employment each year, with only 3 percent exiting after two years in such programs (Parent, 1990).
- Supported employment is an acceptable, alternative vocational option for persons with severe disabilities (Parent, 1990; Buckley *et al.*, 1988; RSA, 1989; Twelfth Institute, 1985).

Discussion

Individuals with disabilities participate in postsecondary education and vocational training programs, and in the work force at large, at levels well below the levels of persons without disabilities. Working or not, the majority of individuals with disabilities live at or below the poverty line. And, women with disabilities experience even larger rates of unemployment than men.

Over one and a half million individuals with severe disabilities engage in sheltered workshop and day activities each year. Few of these persons leave these settings for competitive, community-based jobs. In fact, this traditional focus on "skills acquisition before employment" leads to continued participation in these "alternatives to work" (Will, 1984) rather than employment, for most consumers. Supported employment, on the other hand, provides intensive training on the job site to secure the consumer in his/her position, followed by ongoing support services that enable the individual to retain the job.

Successful supported employment programs continue to demonstrate that supported employment can assist an individual with severe disabilities to locate, secure, and maintain community-based employment where perhaps the more traditional vocational assistance models have failed. It is a way for consumers, who have intermittent work histories or who can not maintain a job without ongoing assistance, to join the mainstream work force should they choose to do so. It fosters the independence, financial and otherwise, of these persons, and when practiced in a consumer-driven manner, promotes choice and self-empowerment.

Summary

The philosophies and outcomes of independent living and supported employment reinforce and complement each other.

Major Points

- The concept of independent living is rooted in the belief that control over one's life is primary, and that personal independence can be increased by managing one's own affairs, participating in day-to-day life in the community, and fulfilling a variety of social roles.
- The concept of supported employment is based on the belief that competitive work in an integrated setting is the right of all persons, irrespective of their level of disability.
- The concept of supported employment requires attention to independent living issues, i.e., "mainstream employment" promotes "mainstream living."
- The concept of independent living requires attention to supported employment issues, i.e., "mainstream living" promotes "mainstream employment."
- Independent Living Centers (ILCs) frequently offer many of the support services required by supported employees to sustain employment.

Discussion

Philosophically, supported employment and independent living are based on similar values; the person with a disability deserves the same opportunities in life as non-disabled persons, including the right to self-determination and independence. In support of this belief, supported employment programs and ILCs provide services that promote an independent, integrated life style.

ILCs can offer a range of services that assist persons with disabilities to exercise control over their lives: information and referral; assistance in locating housing; attendant recruitment and placement; advocacy; peer counseling; independent living skills training; career development, training and placement; social and recreational activities; and equipment loan and repair.

Supported employment programs offer two phases of service. In the initial, direct phase of supported employment, services are rendered that train and stabilize the participant in her/his employment position. In the ongoing phase, those related support services that enable the consumer to remain employed in the integrated work setting are continued indefinitely. It is not difficult to see that these direct vocational services and "related support services" fit neatly into the categories of services that can be provided by Independent Living Centers; by offering some level of supported employment services, ILCs can expand the services that they have historically provided and diversify the population of consumers accessing the center. Finally, it is easy to conclude that supported employment, when practiced as a consumer-driven activity, adheres to the independent living principles of consumer choice and self-determination.

Taken together, the respective philosophies and outcomes of independent living and supported employment offer opportunities for persons with severe disabilities to:

- access more fully all the benefits of society, two of the most important of which may include productive paid employment and community integration, and

- enhance their levels of acceptance and respect as contributing members of the community.

Summary

As an activity offered by an Independent Living Center, supported employment can be a technique used to address both individual and systems advocacy.

Major Points

- In the process of working with a specific group of people involved in supported employment programming, staff members of the ILC can be active community advocates for these individuals in the following areas, among others:
    - community integrated employment
    - transportation
    - housing
    - counseling
    - leisure and recreation
- By advocating in the community for any one person with a severe disability in a particular supported employment-related area, staff of an Independent Living Center can provide "advocacy through example" for all people with severe disabilities.
- ILC staff can also function as supported employment consumer advocates in funding negotiations with vocational rehabilitation counselors and administrators, in an effort to sensitize funding agency staff members to the individual and highly variable needs of consumers who are attempting to direct their own supported employment activities.

Discussion

When offered by an Independent Living Center, supported employment activities can also provide opportunities to pursue both individual and systems advocacy on behalf of participating consumers, as well as for all people with severe disabilities in the community. Because of the need to consider often necessary employment-related services such as transportation, housing, or counseling in the overall process of obtaining and maintaining supported employment positions desired by ILC consumers, staff members may need to advocate in other community areas outside that of employment alone. As an example, suppose that a supported employment consumer who uses a wheelchair and depends upon public transportation is offered a position of his choice in a business not accessible by current mainline bus service. For the consumer to be able to obtain and maintain such a job may depend upon the success of an ongoing ILC advocacy campaign to the public transportation agency for accessible mainline bus route expansion or extension on behalf of the employee. While the primary immediate beneficiary of such advocacy activities may be the supported employment consumer, other people with severe disabilities in the community will be likely to benefit as well.

Or suppose that ILC staff can document the need for pre-employment awareness building and work assessment for a group of supported employment-eligible consumers with no work experience, in order to assist them in making informed choices about job preferences. The level of initial consumer-driven supported employment services that seem appropriate for these consumers may not be immediately understood or approved by state vocational rehabilitation counselors or administrators. In order to acquaint funding agency staff members with the intensive supported employment needs presented by particular consumers, advocacy may play a part in any successful negotiations for funding. Without such advocacy efforts on the part of ILC staff members, it is likely that supported employment funding decisions for people with severe disabilities and with little or no previous work history will follow "more traditional" case closure schedules, resulting in potentially premature termination of services and possible jeopardizing of the job placement.

ILC staff advocacy on behalf of individual consumers will result in future benefits for other people with disabilities in your community. ILC staff members can pursue community "advocacy through example" and can provide unique and concrete demonstrations of how to offer consumer-driven supported employment services for people with severe disabilities.

Summary

In thinking about implementing a supported employment program, Independent Living Center (ILC) board members and staff sometimes express concern about funding, the prevailing business climate, staffing requirements, and transportation issues.

Major Points

- Organizations considering the option of offering supported employment services may express the following concerns:
    - Is there funding available for supported employment services?
    - Can we place people in jobs when the economy is down?
    - Are staff available for a supported employment program?
    - Can people get to their jobs?
- In general, these concerns can be responded to positively. There are recognized sources of funding; jobs can be found even in times of recession; existing staff can be trained or additional staff recruited; and, transportation options can be arranged.

Discussion

Organizations looking at the prospect of offering supported employment services sometimes worry about funding, job availability, current staff capability, or transportation problems. Certainly, these areas demand consideration and are a necessary part of supported employment service delivery. In most instances, these questions receive positive answers; funding, job placement, staffing, transportation all can be arranged. However, in certain situations, it is also possible that any of these concerns could become an obstacle to the implementation of a supported employment program.

In an effort to help ILC board members and staff address these issues, the following sections of this manual will provide information about each of these major areas.

Summary

Supported employment programs can develop multiple funding streams for the initial and ongoing phases of supported employment.

Major Points

- State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies can fund initial, intensive services only (through Title VI-C and Title I, Section 110 monies), for a maximum period of 18 months.
- Potential funding sources for services provided in both phases (initial and ongoing) of supported employment are:
  - State Offices of Human Resources [e.g., mental health agencies, mental retardation agencies, developmental disabilities agencies, agencies for the blind and deaf, education agencies]
  - Independent Living Centers (Title VII-B funds)
  - Joint Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs and Private Industry Councils
  - host businesses.
- The Social Security Administration, via various "incentives-to-work" programs, provides benefits to qualified consumers for some selected supported employment-related expenses.
- Organizations that are considering implementing supported employment services can investigate funding options in their local community and state by contacting:
  - a local vocational rehabilitation counselor

- the coordinator of supported employment in the state Vocational Rehabilitation agency (See Attachment VIII: **Directory of State Administrators of State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies.**)
- state-wide coordinators of agencies that serve those with mental retardation, long-term mental illness, visual impairment, hearing impairment, developmental disability, and others
- local JTPA programs and the Private Industry Council
- the nearest Social Security office

Discussion

The most likely source of funding for direct services is the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. The 1986 Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 designated funds for supported employment through Title VI, Part C, and authorized the use of Title I funds (general case service dollars) for supported employment. (In addition, in the event any funding stream of the DVR is exhausted, an "order of selection" is imposed that gives priority to people with severe disabilities. this order of selection may or may not include supported employment services.) State rehabilitation agencies receive funds specifically for supported employment initial, time-limited services from the federal government. For each individual who qualifies for supported employment, these funds may be used for a maximum of 18 consecutive months. Typically, these funds can be used to pay for: assessment; intensive on-the-job training; regular observation/supervision of the supported employee at the job site; follow-up services with the supported employee, employers, parents or guardians, and others to stabilize the individual in his/her job.

Typically, the state vocational rehabilitation system can provide funds through three distribution mechanisms: grants, contracts, and fees for service. Grants or contracts are awarded to vendors (organizations) to start-up and establish a supported employment direct services program. Once established, organizations that qualify as vendors of direct supported employment services are paid to provide these services at a defined rate, for a specified period of time, and for a total number of hours by the state vocational rehabilitation agency via fee-for-service agreements. (*Possible Funding Mechanisms*, Vol.4, No.1)

Should vocational rehabilitation funds for initial, time-limited services be unavailable for a particular individual(s), supported employment service providers may be able to (with prior planning and agreement) access monies from state offices/agencies of mental retardation and mental health, developmental disabilities, blindness/visual impairments, deafness, education, or others. Independent Living Centers can designate funds (Title VII-B) for initial supported employment services. Joint Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs and Private Industry Councils also are potential funding sources. Finally, businesses that employ the supported employee will sometimes pay for part or all of the on-the-job training services.

Though Title VI, Part C of the 1986 Amendments requires "ongoing services" as a part of supported employment, it does not set aside monies for these services. Vocational rehabilitation funds can not be used for the long-term funding of supported employment ongoing services. State agencies that usually provide long-term case management and services for particular populations of individuals with disabilities are a possible source for these funds. JTPA programs and Private Industry Councils may also be of some assistance. Businesses can bear the cost of the long-term phase of on-the-job services. An independent living center must anticipate this "shift" in funding and make prior arrangements for this eventuality.

In a letter dated October 10, 1990, Harold D. Viaille, Region VI Commissioner for the Rehabilitation Services Administration, stated: "We find no statutory or regulatory prohibition in the use of Title VII Part B funds for the provision of long-term Supported Employment services, following closure by the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency." Therefore, the Boards of Directors of Independent Living Centers can choose to allocate Title VII-B funds for ongoing support services to supported employees. [See Commissioner Viaille's letter at the end of this section.]

Finally, with the aid of Social Security Administration "incentives-to-work" programs, consumers can finance their own long-term, on-the-job training services. These programs are available to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. The incentive programs include: Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE), and Student Income Exclusion. [See Chapter 3 **Social Security Work Incentives** for more information on these programs.]

Supported employment service delivery organizations may need to access a variety of funding entities depending upon the types of services offered and the disabilities of the persons being served. [For more detailed information on arranging funding for supported employment services, see Chapter 3 **The ABCs of Funding**.]

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
REGION VI
1200 MAIN TOWER BUILDING
DALLAS TEXAS 75202

Rehabilitation Services
Administration

October 10, 1990

Dr. John D. Westbrook, Director
National Model for Supported Employment
and Independent Living
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street
Austin, Texas 79701

Dear Dr. Westbrook:

This is in response to your September 27, 1990, request for a written statement concerning the statutory appropriateness of using Title VII Part B funds to pay for certain Supported Employment services.

We find no statutory or regulatory prohibition in the use of Title VII Part B funds for the provision of long-term Supported Employment services, following closure by the State Vocational Rehabiltation agency. Title VI Part C funds may be used to purchase services from any acceptable vendor, for eligible and appropriate clients of a State VR agency.

In the spirit of the independent living movement, the board of directors of each independent living center has the responsibility for determining under statute and regulations how the center dollars are to be spent. Therefore, no commitment or priority for the provision of supported employment services by an independent living center may be mandated by Rehabilitation Services Administration or any other outside entity.

We wish you continued success in the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living.

Sincerely,

Harold D. Viaille
Harold D. Viaille, Ph.D.
Regional Commissioner

cc: RSA Commissioner Nell Carney

Funding Mechanisms for Supported Employment

Supported Employment Phase/Services	Form	Potential Funding Source
Phase I - DIRECT SERVICES • Consumer/Family Orientation • Assessment/ Planning	Hourly fees for service Blockgrants/Contracts	State Offices of Human Resources State Offices of Education Independent Living Centers Social Security Administration JTPA Programs Private Industry Council
• Assessment • Job Placement and On-the-job skills training • Follow-up services that stabilize the supported employee	Hourly fees for service Blockgrants/Contracts	All of the above State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Social Security Administration
Phase II - ONGOING SERVICES • Regular observation/skills training at job-site (at least 2 x/month) [excluding persons with long-term mental illness]	Hourly fees for service Blockgrants/Contracts	State Offices of Human Resources Independent Living Centers Social Security Administration JTPA Programs and PICs Host Businesses Consumers
• Other services that support the individual in supported employment, e.g., housing, transportation, recreation, attendant referral/assistance; health maintenance; independent living skills training	Hourly fees for service Blockgrants/Contracts	State Office of Human Resources Independent Living Centers Social Security Administration Consumers

THESE AGENCIES/ ORGANIZATIONS:	MAY FUND:
State Vocational Rehabilitation	1. Time-limited initial training services (assessment, on-the-job skills training, follow-up services that stabilize the Supported Employment)
State Offices of Human Resources	1. Stabilization 2. Long-term follow-along services, i.e., ongoing services
State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council	1. Start-up activities 2. Model supported employment demonstration projects 3. Training grants 4. Evaluation projects
Independent Living Centers	1. Time-limited initial training services 2. Long-term follow-along services, i.e., ongoing services
State Special or Vocational Educational Programs	1. Model demonstrations 2. Employment-directed programs for transition age youth
Joint Training Partnership Act Programs (JPTA) or Private Industry Councils	1. Job placement 2. Job-site training 3. Follow-along services, i.e., ongoing services
Social Security Administration	1. Time-limited initial training services 2. Long-term follow-along services, i.e., ongoing services
Host Companies	1. On-the-job training, usually ongoing services

[Adapted from *Managing Supported Employment Costs*, 1988]

Summary

The current state of the business and labor markets indicates a promising outlook for supported employment opportunities, even in time of recession.

Major Points

- Economists and business planners are forecasting a labor shortage over the next twenty years.
- The results of a recent study by *Nation's Business* indicate that:
    - Only 10 percent of employers surveyed report never having difficulty locating qualified workers.
    - Employers report that they have some level of difficulty locating workers who already have the skills needed to perform established work responsibilities 95 percent of the time.
    - Well over 50% of the respondents said the future supply of workers was inadequate to meet their needs
    - Approximately half of all current workers are not perceived by employers as having a dedicated/flexible work attitude.

(*Nation's Business*, February 1991, pp.16-22)

- Recent studies show that most employers would hire an employee with a disability if there was an opening, and would hire someone because of the follow-along component of supported employment.

- Workers with disabilities represent a largely untapped pool of labor for business and industry.

- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires employers to consider "reasonable accommodation" to allow qualified individuals with disabilities to occupy vacant positions. Supported employment is considered to be a "reasonable accommodation."

Discussion

Due to the aging of the Baby Boomers, economists and industry leaders are projecting a labor crisis over the next 20 years in middle and entry level positions. The results of a 1991 *Nation's Business* survey not only supports this projection but forces us to conclude that many of today's workers are not prepared for the jobs that are and will be available. In addition, employers perceive many of their employees as rigid and without dedication. These shortages and weaknesses in the work force will create a competitive labor market for persons with disabilities.

Appropriately placed workers with disabilities have demonstrated that they are equal to or better than their non-disabled coworkers in safety (accident rate), attendance and punctuality, job stability and turnover, and levels of job satisfaction and motivation. Importantly, success on the job is not related to the level of disability of the individual. (*Bonus Facts*, Vol.3, No.1)

The results of a recent study of employers showed that:

- 86% of employers believe that workers with disabilities "deserve the right to work"

- 59% would hire a person with a disability if there was an opening

- 64% would hire someone because of the follow-along component

(Supported Employment Telecourse Network, 1991)

In another study of 483 employers in Virginia by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center at Virginia Commonwealth University, over 80% of those employers surveyed who had not previously hired a worker with mental retardation reported that they had not done so because none had applied. Employers overwhelmingly indicated interest in using supported employment services. (*Survey of Employers*, Vol.4, No.2)

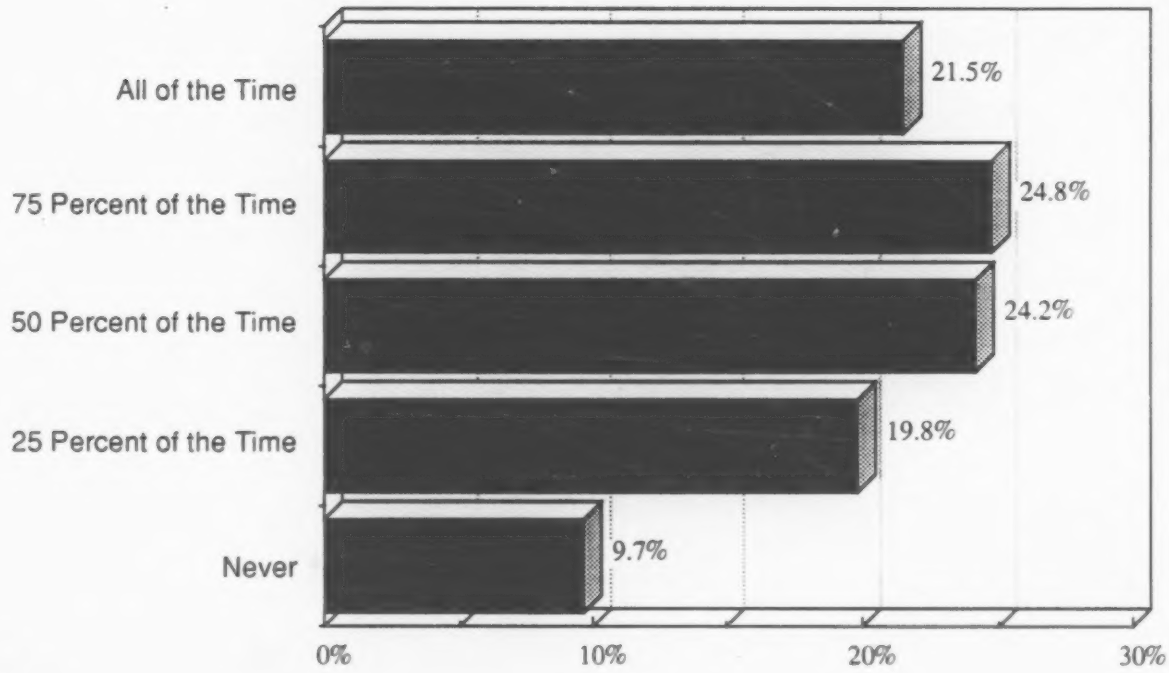
Given the current and projected state of the labor market, the proven track record of appropriately employed persons with disabilities, and the willingness of employers to consider supported employment programs, it seems reasonable to conclude that, in general, opportunities for supported employees are and will be available in the market place. It is the responsibility of supported employment program staff to seek out and develop those opportunities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in employment generally include the following:

> Employers may not discriminate against an individual with a disability in hiring or promotion if the person is otherwise qualified for the job.
>
> Employers can ask about one's ability to perform a job, but cannot inquire if someone has a disability or subject a person to tests that tend to screen out people with disabilities.
>
> Employers will need to provide "reasonable accommodation" to qualified individuals with disabilities. This may include steps such as job restructuring and modification of equipment as well as supported employment.
>
> *Who needs to comply*:
> All employers with 25 or more employees must comply, effective July 26, 1992.
> All employers with 15-24 employees must comply, effective July 26, 1994.

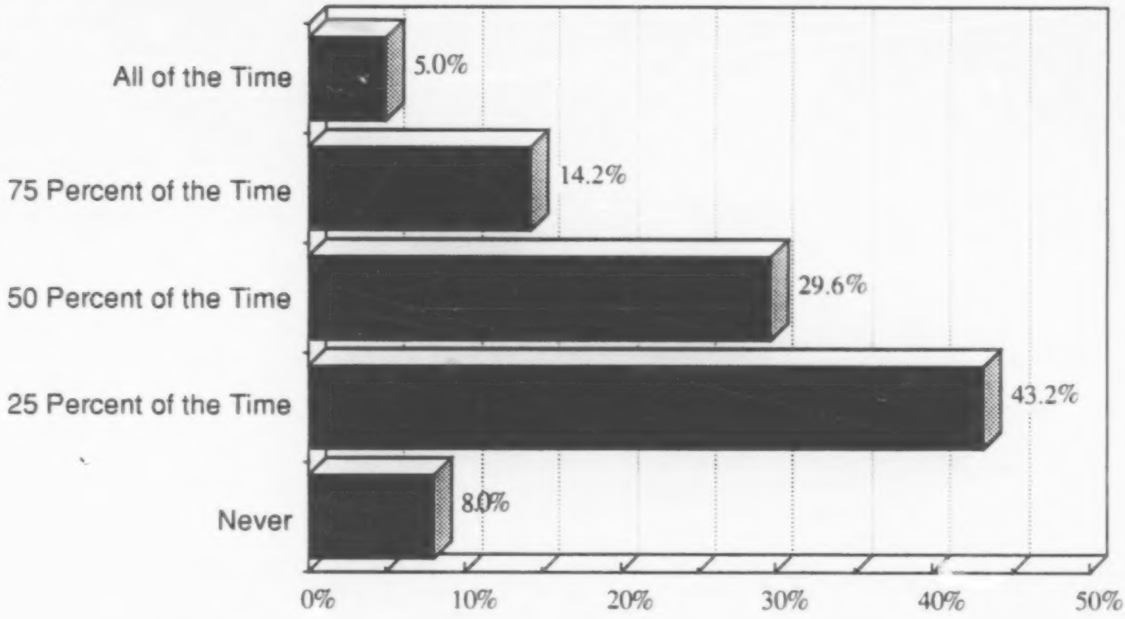
The non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation provisions of the ADA along with accessible transportation provisions should expand the opportunities for employment for persons with severe disabilities. Supported employment is considered a reasonable accommodation in hiring and promotion, thus opening up a previously untapped labor force for American business.

How often are you experiencing difficulty in finding qualified workers for the jobs you must fill?



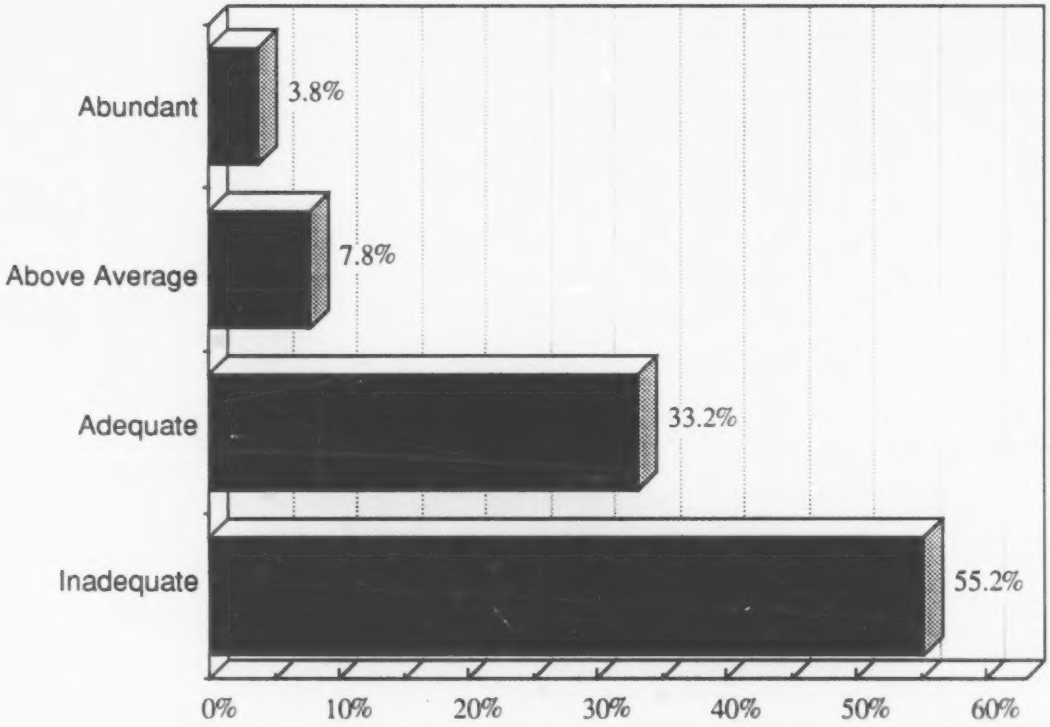
(Finding the Right Workers, *Nation's Business*, February 1991, pp. 16-22.)

In hiring, how often do you find workers who already have the skills you need?



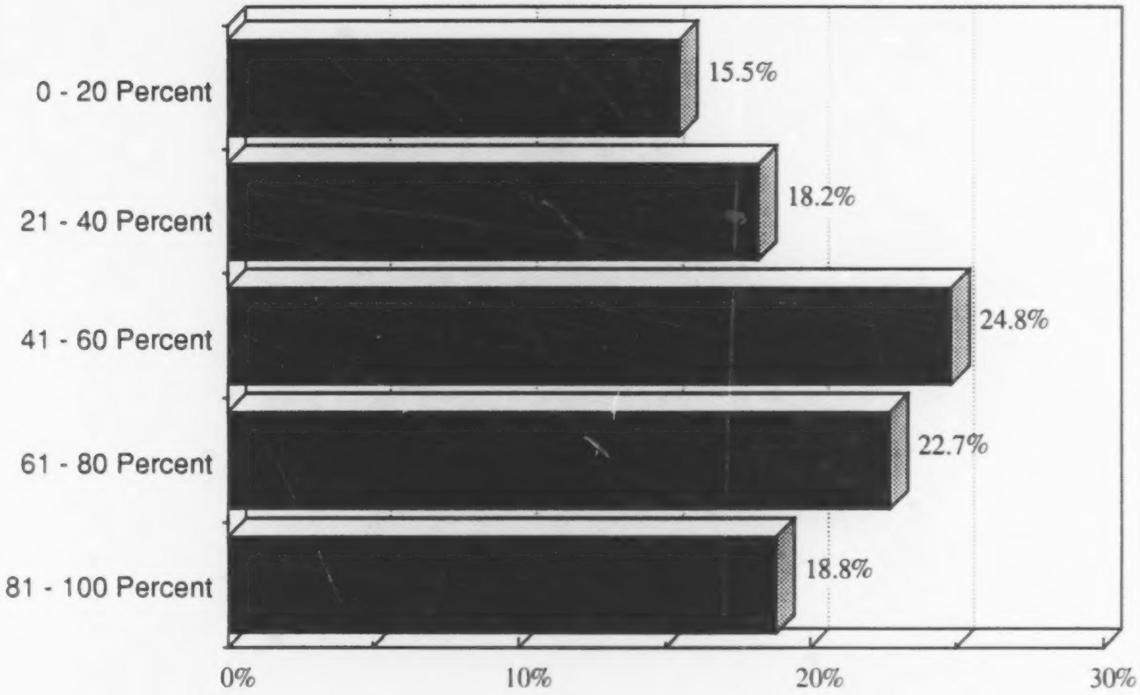
(Finding the Right Workers, *Nation's Business*, February 1991, pp. 16-22.)

How would you describe the supply of skilled labor for your employment needs over the next five years?



(Finding the Right Workers, *Nation's Business*, February 1991, pp. 16-22.)

What percentage of your workers would you say have a dedicated and flexible attitude about their work?



(Finding the Right Workers, *Nation's Business*, February 1991, pp. 16-22.)

A RECENT STUDY SHOWED THAT:

86% OF EMPLOYERS BELIEVE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES "DESERVE THE RIGHT TO WORK."

59% WOULD HIRE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IF THERE WAS AN OPENING.

64% WOULD HIRE SOMEONE BECAUSE OF THE FOLLOW-ALONG COMPONENT.

70% OF EMPLOYERS BELIEVED PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES COULD COMPLETE THE JOB.

48% OF EMPLOYERS HIRED WORKERS BECAUSE THEY WERE IMPRESSED BY THE EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVE.

(Supported Employment Telecourse Network, 1991, p.40)

Summary

Staffing a supported employment program may require the services of a supported employment advocate(s) and some specific training for Independent Living Center (ILC) staff members.

Major Points

- A supported employment advocate (also called a job coach) is a community-based person who provides individualized job placement, job-site training, and ongoing assessment and support for persons with severe disabilities.
- Supported employment advocates can be recruited and/or ILC staff can be trained in the skills necessary to provide these services.
- The number of supported employment advocates needed by an organization depends on the number of persons it intends to serve and the model(s), i.e., individual placement, enclave, work crew, entrepreneurial, it will utilize. However, two supported employment advocates will suffice to start a program.
- Related support services (e.g., housing, transportation, attendant care, legal advocacy) can be provided by a supported employment advocate and/or by others skilled in providing these services.
- ILC staff who already provide support services may require training to develop skills in working with new populations of consumers.

Discussion

The provision of job placement, on-the-job training, and ongoing assessment and support is the primary duty of a supported employment advocate. The competencies required of a supported employment advocate range from a knowledge of consumer assessment, job development, and behavioral training techniques to a knowledge of business concerns, marketing, interpersonal skills, and agency regulations. An ILC could hire an experienced supported employment advocate and/or seek training for current ILC staff member(s) to serve in this capacity.

An equally important part of the supported employment delivery system is the related support services that are required to maintain an individual in her/his supported employment position. ILC staff members have experience in providing some of these services and would only require some training in specific areas (e.g., supported employment, skills to work with persons with particular disabilities) in order to assist the individual in supported employment.

In most cases, staff can be hired and/or trained to provide the services that comprise a supported employment program. [See Chapter 3 **Personnel Requirements** for more information on staffing.]

Summary

Supported employment programs frequently can overcome transportation difficulties through the creative use of various transportation arrangements.

Major Points

- Transportation, public or otherwise, is frequently a problem for all persons with disabilities, regardless of the geographic area in which they live.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that public transportation systems provide transportation that is accessible to individuals with disabilities by January 26, 1992.
- In areas without public transportation systems, individuals with disabilities must rely on private transportation options.
- Supported employment staff may need to be creative in considering options to meet the transportation needs of supported employment consumers and should think about transportation as an aspect of the long-term employment of the supported employee.
- For individuals receiving SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and/or SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) the expense of transportation to and from work may be approved as an Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE).
- For individuals receiving SSI and participating in a Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS), a fund may be set aside to purchase a private vehicle if it is related to achieving the stated vocational outcome resulting in increased income.

Discussion

Supported employment advocates indicate that a frequent major implementation problem in supported employment is a lack of continued, reliable transportation. This aspect of placing individuals in community-based jobs can sometimes lengthen the planning and job development phases of the supported employment process. However, this difficulty is not new or unique for persons with disabilities and frequently demands creativity and flexibility on the part of those working out transportation problems.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all public transportation systems provide some form of accessible transportation, fixed route or paratransit, to individuals with disabilities. The ADA requirements that relate to public transportation include the following:

- One car per train must be accessible. Effective date: By July 26, 1995
- Existing "key stations" in rapid rail, commuter rail, and light rail systems must be accessible. Effective date: By July 26, 1993 (extensions possible).
- Accessible paratransit services must be provided to individuals with disabilities who cannot use fixed route bus service to the extent that an undue financial burden is not imposed. Effective date: By January 26, 1992
- A comparable paratransit or other special transit service must be provided to individuals with disabilities if fixed-route public transit system is unavailable to the extent that undue financial burden is not imposed. Effective date: January 26, 1992

In practical terms, the ADA requires public transportation systems to provide either an accessible fixed route system with paratransit transportation to fixed-route stops, or a portal-to-portal paratransit system by January 26, 1992.

Obviously, the greatest difficulty may occur in areas with no public transportation system. In this case, staff must be enterprising and thoughtful in their approach to this issue. It is suggested that in making transportation decisions with the supported employee and/or his family, staff look to the long-term maintenance of employment. Possible arrangements could be:

- The supported employee drives a personal vehicle to work.
- The supported employee obtains a job close to his/her residence or moves closer to the job-site to facilitate transportation options.
- For a fee, the individual rides in a car pool with individuals from the job-site.
- The individual utilizes a private cab company for transportation to and from work.
- A family member provides transportation in the short-run while longer term options are being evaluated and arranged.

The costs of transportation to and from work (for those certified by a doctor as unable to drive to work) may be allowed as an Impairment Related Work Expense by individuals receiving SSI and/or SSDI. This would include a fair fee for private transportation in those areas where reliable, accessible public transportation is not available. The costs of transportation, including the purchase of a vehicle, may be part of a PASS if these costs contribute to the accomplishment of the stated vocational objective. Both of these options in effect reduce the out-of-pocket cost of transportation for the individual. However, obtaining an IRWE or a PASS requires prior planning and agreement with the Social Security Administration. [See Chapter 3 **Social Security Work Incentives** for more information on PASS and IRWE.]

Summary

ILC Board members and staff can determine the need for supported employment in the local community by gathering information from various agencies, service providers, and consumer groups.

Major Points

- In order to collect data about supported employment in the local community, ILC Board members and staff can contact:
    - a local vocational rehabilitation counselor or the state-wide coordinator for supported employment services for the vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency. This individual can provide information on what supported employment programs exist and what services are in need of development.
    - the state-wide coordinator(s) for supported employment services for the vocational rehabilitation agency (blind and general VR). This person can detail the range of services the agency is prepared to fund and any priorities for services or disability groups that have been established. [See Attachment VIII: **Directory of State Administrators of State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies.**]
    - supported employment service providers. These organizations can furnish the details of supported employment in the area. Examples of organizations that may offer supported employment are private vendors, disability associations such as the Association for Retarded Citizens, Goodwill Industries, Lighthouses for the Blind, Easter Seals, and the public schools.

  - ILC consumers. They can describe their interest and past experiences in supported employment.
  - business and community representatives, Chamber of Commerce, Private Industry Council (PIC).

- ILC Board Members and staff can use these and other resources to determine if there is a need for selected supported employment services in the local community and/or a need for services for individuals with particular disabilities.

Discussion

Independent Living Center Boards of Directors and staff should actively participate in the process of collecting data about supported employment services in the community. Funding agencies and direct service providers can furnish valuable information about the status of supported employment in a given community. Once a list of the local supported employment programs has been generated, board members and staff can conduct an informal survey of those programs. The following is a list of questions that might be asked:

> What kind of supported employment services do you provide?
>
> How many individuals do you serve?
>
> What disability groups do you serve?
>
> What businesses are supported employees working in?
>
> Are supported employees receiving some services but not others? If so, what services do these individuals need that they are not receiving?
>
> Do you have a waiting list for your supported employment services?

Another valuable source of information is the ILC consumer population. Consumer interest in and need for supported employment could be determined by: (1) reviews of past and current intake files, (2) interviews with present consumers, and (3) interviews with direct service staff. Finally, the business community can be surveyed both in terms of current involvement in supported employment and the potential for future participation.

Once these data have been gathered and summarized, ILC board members can determine the need for supported employment services in the local community. The "need" may present itself in several forms:

- Selected populations of individuals with severe disabilities may be underserved.
- Individuals with severe disabilities may be dissatisfied with the services they are receiving. This dissatisfaction could be linked to a lack of attention to the consumer's preferences in various aspects of the supported employment process, or to a failure to address their career aspirations.
- Certain populations of individuals with severe disabilities may not be receiving supported employment services at all. For example, an ILC may find that persons with traumatic brain injury may have no access to supported employment even though it is well documented that these individuals are successful in supported employment positions.

In each of these cases, a "gap" in services exists. ILC board members can decide to fill a gap by providing selected supported employment services with a consumer-driven approach, and/or targeting a specific group of individuals for provision of supported employment services.

Summary

An Independent Living Center (ILC) can decide to provide selected or no supported employment services, and can establish those services within the ILC in different ways.

Major Points

- In considering the option to offer supported employment services, ILC Boards of Directors should consider the following factors:
  - the need for supported employment services in the local community
  - local business and economic conditions
  - the availability of funding
- The Independent Living Center can provide:
  - intensive time-limited, and ongoing services
  - intensive time-limited services only
  - ongoing services only
  - no supported employment services
- Supported employment services can be organized within the Independent Living Center in three configurations: *independent*, *partially integrated*, and *fully integrated*.

Discussion

After evaluating need in the community, available funding, and the local business/economic climate, an ILC Board of Directors may decide that the provision of supported employment services is not appropriate for their ILC. However, this decision not to be directly involved in supported employment service delivery is not as simple or conclusive as it may seem. It is important that ILC staff and board members become familiar with and knowledgeable about supported employment. Staff will need to keep abreast of developments in supported employment in the community in order to conduct meaningful intakes and make appropriate referrals to other supported employment programs. And, even though the center may not officially offer "ongoing services," persons participating in supported employment may still come to the center for assistance with housing, transportation, and other requests that are associated with supported employment jobs. The Board of Directors and the staff can expect to see supported employment participants in the ILC, seeking the support services that it offers. The needs of supported employees often require a quick response if maintenance/non-maintenance of employment is involved; this require a different response on the part of ILC staff to be effective. It seems reasonable to expect that ILC staff and board members be familiar with supported employment and open to reconsidering their decision based on changing conditions.

If ILC Boards of Directors say yes to supported employment, they must determine what level of services to offer, i.e., intensive time-limited, ongoing, or both, and how to organize the delivery of those services within the ILC. The delivery of supported employment services can be established within the ILC in three primary configurations: (1) *independent*, (2) *partially integrated*, and (3) *fully integrated*.

(1) In the *independent* configuration, supported employment services are provided without relationship to the ILC or the other activities it offers to consumers. The supported employment component is operated independently of other ILC components and has separate staff, a separate consumer base, and separate fiscal accounts.

(2) In a *partially integrated* configuration, some portion of supported employment activities will be pursued in concert with other activities that the ILC may offer to consumers, e.g., housing, transportation, counseling, advocacy, or community integration. Other supported employment activities will be independently offered to consumers receiving supported employment services. Under this arrangement, some staff members and some consumers may span both supported employment-specific activities and other ILC activities.

(3) In a *fully integrated* supported employment/ILC configuration, all supported employment activities are completely subsumed within ongoing ILC activities. From the point of initial consumer intake forward, supported employment is integrated into the activities of the ILC and is made available to all consumers. Consumers and staff involved in supported employment activities are generally indistinguishable from other ILC consumers or staff not directly involved in supported employment.

The Board of Directors can determine the particular organization of supported employment services within the ILC by considering such factors as the character of services to be offered; staffing requirements, capabilities, and interests; funding arrangements, reporting/accounting capabilities, etc. However, the *fully integrated* organization seems to offer the most in terms of consumer empowerment and choice. The ILC that offers supported employment as it offers other IL activities does not set up any artificial barriers between those participating in supported employment and those participating in other IL areas, or between staff providing those services; supported employment activities become one component of an ILC program that offers all of its consumers a range of support services that enable them to pursue their personal goals.

Chapter 3

Planning for Implementation

**SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE**

Summary

Based upon the needs of the community, the desires of potential consumers, and the priorities of funding agencies, supported employment programs can choose to offer one or any combination of the four placement models.

Major Points

- The following briefly describes the four placement models of supported employment:
  - In the Individual Placement Model, an individual works in an integrated job in the local business community.
  - In the Enclave Model, individuals work as a group of six to eight within the same business.
  - In the Mobile Work Crew Model, six to eight individuals are usually employed by a non-profit agency to provide services to community businesses on a contractual basis.
  - In the Entrepreneurial (or Small Business) Model, individuals with disabilities and non-disabled individuals work in a small business (merchandising, manufacturing, service) that is owned by the person(s) with disabilities.
- The long-term goals, desires, and interests of those individuals who will be participating in the program should determine the appropriate placement model.
- The model or models that the state vocational rehabilitation agency requires for reimbursement may assist in decision-making.

- The needs of the local business community will help determine which model will provide the best opportunities for employment.

- Though the costs for each model can vary dramatically, in general, the Individual Placement and Enclave models are generally less expensive over time.

- The Individual Placement Model and the Enclave Model provide more opportunities for integration with non-disabled persons.

- In general, it is easiest to start with one model of implementation; others can be added later if needed.

Discussion

As the first step in the decision-making process about what model(s) to use, an organization should check with the state vocational rehabilitation agency to determine what models it will fund. Sometimes, the funding priority of this agency will in and of itself determine the kind of model an organization can feasibly implement.

Given some flexibility in funding, there are characteristics of each model that influence its relative attractiveness:

- The Individual Placement Model usually provides the most flexibility for the consumer, the most integration with non-disabled persons, and the highest average wage. The supported employment program can serve a varying number of individuals with relative ease.

- The Enclave and Mobile Work Crew allow for a fixed number of individuals (6-8). This reduces the flexibility of the organization in terms of the number of persons it can place in these models at a given point in time; availability of placements depend on attrition or the start-up of a new enclave or crew.

- The Mobile Work Crew Model usually requires an up-front financial investment in equipment, e.g., vans, landscaping/cleaning equipment. This cost may be borne by the non-profit agency itself or by an agency that provides start-up funds.
- The Entrepreneurial Model generally requires the use of small business or other loans to provide capital for the start-up of the business. Usually, these loans must be applied for by persons with disabilities who are willing to take on a long-term financial commitment.
- The Enclave and Mobile Work Crew may present fewer demands on "helping agency" staff to provide ongoing services than do the other models.

The employment needs and general character of local business and industry can also help shape this decision. And, perhaps most importantly, attention must be paid to the expressed desires and interests of those persons with severe disabilities who will be working in the supported employment positions. [See Chapter 1 **Supported Employment Program Alternatives** for more detailed information on the four models.]

Summary

In order to implement a supported employment program, the Independent Living Center may need to hire additional staff and/or provide specialized training to its current staff.

Major Points

- A supported employment advocate (also referred to as a job coach or supported employment specialist) is a community-based person who provides individualized job placement, skill training at the job-site, and ongoing assessment and support for persons with severe disabilities.
- A supported employment advocate(s) is required to implement the Individual Placement, Enclave, and Mobile Work Crew, and Entrepreneurial models of supported employment.
- Competencies required of a successful supported employment advocate include knowledge of the following areas:
  - consumer assessment
  - job analysis
  - job placement
  - behavioral training strategies
  - fading techniques
  - counseling
  - advocacy
  - evaluation techniques
  - employer needs
  - business concerns
  - staff roles
  - interpersonal skills
  - parent/caregiver concerns
  - regulations of public and private agencies

  (Twelfth Institute, 1985)
- Two supported employment advocates are sufficient to start a supported employment program. In a start-up program, the two advocates together will be able to place, train, and

support 5-10 supported employees in the first year. In a mature program, an employment advocate providing both intensive and ongoing services can serve about eight supported employees per year. (Ruth, Hill & Wood, 1990)

- The supported employment advocate serves as a link between the consumer, the Independent Living Center (ILC), the employer, the vocational rehabilitation counselor, the long-term case manager, other direct service providers, and the family or caregiver.

- The supported employment advocate is responsible for providing and/or coordinating related services (assistance/referral for housing, transportation, attendant care, independent living skills training) that are needed by individuals to obtain and maintain employment.

- The staff of an ILC may possess all or some of the competencies required of a supported employment advocate.

- The staff of an ILC may already deliver a range of related support services that are needed by an individual with severe disabilities to secure and maintain long-term competitive employment.

DISCUSSION

The supported employment advocate performs many functions in the supported employment process. The supported employment advocate conducts relevant assessment activities, including those that help consumer with limited vocational experiences determine what they wish to do. The supported employment advocate is the primary trainer and advocate in the employment setting. He/she develops an appropriate job for the individual with severe disabilities, places the person in the job, provides on-the-job training, and ongoing assessment and problem resolution. The supported employment advocate goes with the consumer to the job interview, helps fill out applications, communicates the consumer's abilities, and assists both the consumer and the employer with integration into the work place. The supported employment advocate works with the consumer at the job site. He/she analyzes the job, breaks it into manageable pieces, and utilizes the least intrusive behavioral training methods to assist the client in learning and mastering the skills necessary to perform the job. Initially, the supported employment advocate may perform a significant amount of the consumer's work until satisfactory performance is achieved. As the consumer masters the job, the coach gradually fades from the work site until a minimum level of contact is reached. (Based on Wehman & Melia, 1985)

The supported employment advocate works with the employer by helping the employer learn how to promote worker interaction and to provide support and training to supervisors. The supported employment advocate can assist employers with the provision of cost effective, reasonable accommodations that are necessary to adapt the job to match the consumer's abilities. The supported employment advocate interacts with co-workers as well. She/he can introduce the supported employee and model appropriate ways to interact. With attention to the consumer's right to privacy, the supported employment advocate can inform workers of reasonable expectations of behavior of the consumer on the job. This function of helping the individual with disabilities integrate socially into the work place is extremely important.

Finally, the supported employment advocate serves as a connection between the consumer, the ILC, the family or caregiver, a case manager, and others who may work directly with the consumer. He/she may need to provide information and support to these individuals as well as solicit it from them.

Once the consumer is "stabilized" in a particular job, he/she enters the "ongoing" phase of supported employment. The supported employment advocate must provide or arrange for on-the-job observation and retraining at least twice a month. (Persons with long-term mental illness are excluded from this on-the-job training requirement; they must receive required ongoing services off the job site.) The supported employment advocate also provides periodic assessment that includes attention to the consumer's desire for increasing job responsibilities, wages, and benefits. The supported employment advocate assists the consumer in obtaining the skills and experience necessary to meet her/his career goals.

During all phases of supported employment, the consumer will need related support services such as mobility/transportation training and assistance, independent living skills training, housing assistance, social skills training. These services can be provided by a supported employment advocate directly, but in many instances, they can be provided by others, e.g., Independent Living staff members. Therefore, the supported employment advocate provides and/or arranges for the provision of the necessary support services that are required to stabilize and maintain the supported employee in the employment position.

As part of the implementation process, ILC board members and/or executive directors will need to determine the need for additional staff and the need for training of current staff. First, the ILC staff must be assessed in terms of their understanding and knowledge of supported employment and their relevant skills. In addition, staff members can be polled about their interest in participating in a supported employment program. Based on this evaluation of the ILC staff, board members and/or executive directors can decide to hire additional staff and/or to seek training in various areas for the present ILC staff. [See the **Resources and Bibliography** section of this manual for information on training and recruitment of supported employment personnel.]

EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT ADVOCATE COMPETENCIES

1. Knowledge of philosophy, concepts, and benefits of supported employment
2. Knowledge of functional limitations and legal rights of a person with mental illness, developmental disability, physical disability, or brain injury
3. Knowledge of job/task analysis procedures
4. Knowledge of effective job matching procedures
5. Knowledge of basic adult training principles and techniques, i.e, natural cues/consequences, functional and social skills acquisition, maintenance, and generalization
6. Knowledge of basic management techniques and procedures in work adjustment in an integrated setting
7. Ability to advocate effectively for the worker at home, at work, and in the community
8. Ability to assess the worker's training needs
9. Ability to conduct a task/job/work site analysis

EXAMPLES OF

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT ADVOCATE

COMPETENCIES (continued)

10. Ability to perform the job taught
11. Ability to adapt/modify job duties and/or work setting to accommodate worker needs
12. Ability to use job match instruments and correlate with worker abilities
13. Ability to orient worker to job site and facilitate positive co-worker relationships
14. Ability to develop a training plan based on worker assessment and task/job/work analysis
15. Ability to model appropriate work behavior and socialization skills and to integrate natural consequences and reinforcers in the fading plan
16. Ability to determine the appropriate time to intervene and implement a behavior management plan
17. Ability to collect and analyze appropriate data regarding worker production and behavior
18. Ability to adjust training plans and work setting based on data collected

EXAMPLES OF

JOB DEVELOPER COMPETENCIES

Prerequisite: Acquired knowledge and demonstrated abilities of Supported Employment Advocate in addition to the following:

1. Knowledge of basic marketing and job development principles and functions
2. Knowledge of agency policies/procedures and other agency resources
3. Knowledge of self-advocacy skills and self-monitoring techniques
4. Knowledge of medication therapy/psychotropic drugs and their side effects
5. Knowledge of employer relationships/networks and community supports/resources
6. Ability to conduct a job market analysis
7. Ability to develop and present marketing materials to prospective employers

EXAMPLES OF

JOB DEVELOPER COMPETENCIES

(continued)

8. Ability to negotiate operating agreements with employers

9. Ability to develop and maintain productive relationships with the local business/civic community

10. Ability to assess worker's vocational and social competencies and functional limitations, and identify work preferences

11. Ability to develop a worker's vocational profile to include all pertinent data and relevant information, i.e., medical, psychological, social, etc.

12. Ability to teach self-monitoring to the worker to maintain production and behavior control

13. Ability to analyze needs and implement strategies for provision of ongoing support and work site integration

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Employment Advocate
Department:	Supported Employment
Supervisor:	Senior Employment Advocate
Work Hours:	40 hours weekly with prearranged scheduling
Exemption Status:	Exempt
Employment Status:	Full Time
Salary:	$750 Bi-monthly ($1,500 Monthly)
Benefits:	Life, Health, Dental
Travel:	Required; Extensive
Probationary Status:	90 days upon hiring
Funding:	Three year federal grant project Funds committed 11-1-1988 to 7-31-89 Funds anticipated 8-1-89 to 1-31-91

Position Summary: The Employment Advocate is responsible for providing ongoing individual training at the work site, along with follow-up and advocacy training, in order to ensure that the consumer maintains employment. The Employment Advocate is supervised by the Senior Employment Advocate.

Duties:

1. Assist in the conceptualization, development, and documentation of the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living project.

2. Assist in development of employer contacts for supported employment concept dissemination and specific supported employment placement of severely disabled person.

3. Plan and implement training and technical assistance activities for employers and service providers initiating supported employment programs.

4. Conduct on-the-job- training activities for ongoing supported employment placements at business/industry settings.

5. Assist in program and consumer evaluation data toward identification of an effectiveness continuum related to the national model program.

6. Ensure contract and procedure compliance for Employment Advocate position as appropriate to the national model project.

7. Maintain consumer records, provide required documentation and reports.

8. Organize and conduct off-work site ongoing support sessions as appropriate for those involved in the national model project.

9. Ensure the delivery of services which are reflective of:
   9.1 An Independent Living Philosophy.
   9.2 Consumer empowerment and self-advocacy.

10. Provide feedback to the supervisors for improving the quality of service delivery and national model application.

11. Other duties as assigned by the ARCIL Senior Employment Advocate.

MINIMUM EDUCATION PREFERRED: Earned Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university with a major in vocational rehabilitation counseling, educational psychology, or a related field.

SKILLS: Demonstrated skill in working with business/industry employment personnel, public and private service providers and persons having severe disabilities. Demonstrated skill in planning and conducting training and technical assistance. Ability and willingness to work independently and as a team member. Demonstrated skills in oral and written communication.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE:	Senior Employment Advocate
DEPARTMENT:	Supported Employment
SUPERVISOR:	Programs Manager
WORK HOURS:	40 hours weekly with prearranged scheduling
EXEMPTION STATUS:	Exempt
EMPLOYMENT STATUS:	Full Time
SALARY:	$875 Bi-monthly ($1,750 Monthly)
BENEFITS:	Life, Health, Dental
TRAVEL:	Required; Extensive
PROBATIONARY STATUS:	90 days upon hiring
FUNDING:	Three year federal grant project Funds committed 11-1-1988 to 7-31-89 Funds anticipated 8-1-89 to 1-31-91

POSITION SUMMARY: The Senior Employment Advocate (SEA) is responsible for assisting the SEDL Project Director and Dissemination Associate in the model development, promotion of the supported employment concept and dissemination of training and technical assistance information. The SEA is responsible for creating supported employment positions within the community. The SEA is also responsible for individual training and monitoring of supported employee's support services directly and via supervision of the Employment Advocate .

DUTIES:

1. Assist in the conceptualization, development, and documentation of the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living project.

2. Develop employer contacts for supported employment concept dissemination and specific supported employment placement of severely disabled persons.

3. Plan and implement training and technical assistance activities for employers and service providers initiating supported employment programs.

4. Supervise assigned activities of the Employment Advocate in coordination with objectives for the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living.

5. Conduct on-the-job training activities for ongoing supported employment placements at business/industry settings.

6. Organize and conduct off-worksite ongoing support sessions as appropriate for those involved in the national model project.

7. Provide on-site training and technical assistance on project outcomes to staff of Independent Living Centers across the nation.

8. Assist in program and consumer evaluation data toward identification of an effectiveness continuum related to the national model program.

9. Ensure contract and procedure compliance for Senior Employment Advocate and Employment Advocate positions as appropriate to the national model project.

10. Maintain consumer records, provide required documentation and reports.

11. Ensure the delivery of services which are reflective of:
    11.1 An Independent Living Philosophy.
    11.2 Consumer empowerment and self-advocacy.

12. Provide feedback to the supervisors for improving the quality of service delivery and national model application.

13. Other duties as assigned by the ARCIL Programs Manager and SEDL Project Director.

MINIMUM EDUCATION PREFERRED: Earned Master's Degree from an accredited college or university with a major in vocational rehabilitation counseling, educational psychology, or a related field. Years experience in business/industry experience may be considered for substitution of academic degree(s).

SKILLS: Demonstrated skill in working with business/industry employment personnel, public and private service providers and persons having severe disabilities. Demonstrated skill in planning and conducting training and technical assistance. Ability to present before both large and small groups of professionals. Ability and willingness to work independently and as a team member. Demonstrated skills in oral and written communication.

MINIMUM EXPERIENCE PREFERRED: A minimum of one year full time business/industry experience in human resources or related field. A minimum of one year experience working in an independent living environment, vocational rehabilitation setting or other related setting providing service to disabled person. A minimum of one year work experience providing job development/job placement of persons with disabilities.

Summary

The pursuit of funding for supported employment services can require agreements and/or contracts with various agencies, businesses, and individuals.

Major Points

- The most common sources of funds for intensive, time-limited supported employment services are general vocational rehabilitation and blind vocational rehabilitation service agencies. These funds (authorized through Title I, Title VI, and Title VII of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its 1986 Amendments) are administered by state vocational rehabilitation agencies.
- The most common sources of funds for supported employment's ongoing services are other human resources authorities (developmental disabilities, mental health/mental retardation, commissions for the visually and hearing impaired), and the Social Security Administration, via various work incentive programs.
- With the approval of its Board of Directors, an Independent Living Center (ILC) can use Title VII-B funds for intensive, time-limited supported employment services and related ongoing services.
- Individuals seeking supported employment services (who are not current vocational rehabilitation clients) should be referred immediately to the nearest vocational rehabilitation office to determine eligibility for supported employment vocational rehabilitation funds.

- Individuals seeking supported employment services from an ILC should apply immediately for SSI and SSDI (if not current beneficiaries) as part of the application and intake process.

- Through the careful execution of contracts with community businesses, supported employment programs implementing an enclave or mobile work crew model can fund these models totally or partially through salaries or fees paid by the businesses themselves.

- A willing businessman could pay for all supported employment services -- the least a businessman can do is pay a wage to the supported employee.

- If outside funding is unavailable, the supported employment consumer can pay for some of her/his expenses, such as employment advocate hours.

Discussion

Arranging funding for supported employment services requires the development of multiple funding streams. State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies typically fund certain intensive time-limited services. Other human resources authorities and various Social Security "incentives-to-work" programs typically fund ongoing services. An ILC Board of Directors can choose to allocate Title VII-B funds for either phase of supported employment services. [See Chapter 2 **Funding** for more general information on the funding of supported employment services.]

Individuals seeking supported employment services may be referred to the ILC supported employment program by the state vocational rehabilitation agency. Others will need to be referred to that agency to determine VR eligibility for supported employment services and funding.

For each qualified supported employment participant, the ILC will need to negotiate a fee-for-service agreement with a state vocational rehabilitation counselor. This agreement will identify:

- any assessment(s) the ILC may need to perform
- the nature of the supported employment services being purchased
- the number of employment advocate hours being purchased to provide those services
- the hourly rate of reimbursement
- the frequency and method for determining progress

Once an individual is certified as eligible for supported employment by the state VR agency, the vocational rehabilitation counselor will commonly provide records that document and evaluate the consumer's past educational and work experiences, and work-related skills and abilities. The development of a consumer-driven supported employment plan for the consumer requires a different type of assessment than traditional records reflect. Consumer-driven supported employment assumes that the driving forces in the supported employment process are the likes, dislikes, and interests of the consumer. [See Chapter 1 **Consumer-Driven Supported Employment** more information.] Therefore, it is recommended that, as part of the negotiation of the fee-for-service agreement, ILCs initially contract with VR for a designated number of hours of consumer-driven assessment activities. [See Chapter 4 more detailed information on these activities.] During these assessment activities, the ILC staff will determine the type of job and career that the consumer wants to pursue, the kinds of supports he/she will need to obtain and maintain that job, and the intensity of required supports. The ILC then can negotiate a fee-for-service agreement for on-the-job training and other required services. It is recommended that ILCs provide supported employment placements for only those consumers who are assessed with a consumer-driven focus.

Vocational rehabilitation counselors attempt to close all cases as quickly as possible. The point of closure means termination of VR funding for intensive, time-limited services and can greatly affect the job tenure of the supported employee and the nature and cost of ongoing services.

ILCs must be prepared to document the need for longer-term initial services and advocate for longer periods of VR eligibility for supported employment consumers when necessary.

The VR counselor and the ILC must agree on an hourly rate of reimbursement. This is the rate at which the organization will be reimbursed for supported employment advocate hours spent providing agreed-upon services. This issue will be covered in detail in the next section of this chapter.

The Social Security Administration can indirectly fund some of a qualified consumer's supported employment expenses through work incentive programs that are available to recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. These programs are: Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS); Impairment-Related Work Expense (IRWE); and the Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE). As part of the application and intake process, ILCs should determine the status of potential supported employees with SSI and SSDI, and make application for either or both if the individual is eligible but not receiving these benefits. It is possible that through the use of a PASS and/or an IRWE for supported employment, individuals previously denied SSI or SSDI may qualify for these benefits. For this reason and the fact that application for SSI and SSDI is time-consuming, it is important that the application procedures involving Social Security be initiated immediately upon the consumer's expressed interest in supported employment. The work incentive programs will be discussed in a following section of this chapter.

The ILC, with approval of the Board of Directors, can designate Title VII-B funds for any phase of supported employment services. These funds can be used for specific services (e.g., ongoing services), or can be allocated to fill in the gaps of funding from outside sources (e.g., time-limited initial services for persons who do not qualify for VR funding). As part of the planning-for-supported employment process, the ILC Board of Directors will need to decide the amount of Title VII-B funds that can or will be used for supported employment services.

Funding of supported employment services by businesses and consumers will be discussed in detail in a following section of this chapter.

Summary

To develop appropriate fee-for-service agreements, Independent Living Centers must determine the actual cost of providing supported employment services and negotiate with funding agencies for rates of reimbursement.

Major Points

- Vocational rehabilitation and human resources agencies can utilize four different units of service to pay for supported employment services: supported employment advocate hourly intervention rate; consumer day in employment; consumer entrance into employment; and, year of program service. (Ruth *et al.*, 1990)

- The hourly intervention rate is the preferred funding strategy for initial time-limited services; the hourly intervention rate or year of program service options are preferred for ongoing services.

- The hourly rate of intervention method provides for reimbursement of the supported employment vendor for authorized services rendered to designated consumers by a supported employment advocate, in an authorized amount (i.e., number of hours), at a designated rate per hour.

- The year (or month) of program service method of funding is often thought of as contract funding rather than fee-for-service. The supported employment vendor is given a set amount of money (per some time period) to provide services described in terms of goals (e.g., for number of people served, number employed, number stabilized, retention rates to be achieved). Payment of fees is usually contractual, not based on specific performance. (Ruth *et al.*, 1990)

- Vocational rehabilitation agencies usually have a predetermined range or schedule of hourly fees. The ILC must be able to determine if this amount is adequate to cover all expenses that will be generated.

- To determine the cost of supported employment services, the Independent Living Center must be able to determine the following actual costs:

    - Personnel salaries and benefits (Program Manager, Employment Advocates)

    - Travel

    - Facility costs such as rent, utilities, supplies, communications, reproduction, and others

    - Indirect costs including such expenses as accounting time, . . .

- Vocational rehabilitation agencies may fund some but not all of the activities performed by employment advocates in locating, developing, training and fading from the supported employment work-site. Generally, about 65% of all activities will be billable expenses (Ruth, Hill, & Wood, 1990).

- An actual hourly rate of expense is determined by dividing the total cost of providing supported employment services by the total number of **billable** supported employment advocate hours.

- In order to ensure that most of the actual costs of providing supported employment are reimbursed by the funding agency, the ILC should strive to negotiate with the agency for an hourly rate that exceeds the projected actual hourly rate of expense.

Discussion

Though there are four units of service that can be used by funding agencies to purchase supported employment services, the two units that allow for the most flexibility and discourage "creaming" (i.e., serving those that require fewer intensive long-term services) are the employment advocate hourly rate and the year of program service. The hourly rate of intervention is the most common unit of service for time-limited, intensive training services. Ongoing services are typically funded through hourly rate of service or year of program service agreements. In order to arrange and negotiate funding for initial and/or ongoing services, ILCs must first determine the projected cost of providing the supported employment services they intend to offer. The following guidelines can assist the ILC in estimating supported employment costs:

- The cost of employing one full time (FTE) employment advocate is generally $14,000-$24,000 per year plus 20% fringe benefit costs. Most start-up programs employ 1.5 to 2.0 employment advocates.
- The cost of employing one program manager is $16,000-$24,000 per year plus 20% fringe benefit costs. Most start-up programs employ a Program Manager at 0.3 to 0.5 FTE (30% to 50% of a Full Time Equivalent Position).
- Substitute staff are paid on an hourly basis (with a 10% benefit cost), and are used to cover absent employment advocates. An estimate of the number of substitute hours that will be required in a year is based on the amount of sick, vacation, and holiday leave employment advocates are expected to take.
- Average in-city travel expense per employment advocate ranges from $500-$2500 per year, reimbursed at $.20-$.24 per mile
- Occupancy costs reflect a prorated share of rent usually based either on a ratio of supported employment FTE to agency FTE or actual square footage occupied.

- Other non-personnel expenses (e.g., copying, printing, phones, postage, clerical, etc.) should be projected and tracked directly to the supported employment component if it is cost effective to do so.

- Indirect costs (e.g., accounting time, receptionist time) that are not tracked directly to the supported employment program should reflect a prorated share of the organization's total indirect costs based on some consistent formula applied to overall overhead, e.g., based on personnel ratios.

(Based on Ruth, Hill, & Wood, 1990)

The following budget example projects the cost of the start-up year for a typical supported employment program.

PERSONNEL, including benefits		
Program Manager (0.3 FTE) @ $26,400	$	7,920.00
Employment Advocate (1.0 FTE)		21,600.00
Employment Advocate (1.0 FTE)		21,600.00
Substitutes: 21 eight hour days (0.08 FTE)	1,190.00	
TOTAL PERSONNEL	$	52,310.00
NON-PERSONNEL		
Travel ($1500 per year per Employment Advocate)		3,000.00
Occupancy costs (based on square footage)		2,520.00
Training** ($1,000 per job coach)		2,000.00
TOTAL NON-PERSONNEL	$	7,520.00
INDIRECT COSTS (based on FTE ratio*)		7,140.00
TOTAL SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT COSTS	$	66,970.00

(Based on Ruth *et al.*, 1990)

* The FTE ratio is calculated by dividing the number of FTE positions in the supported employment program by the total number of FTE positions in the organization as a whole. In the above example, this calculates as follows:

FTE ratio = 2.38/25 = .0952 = 9.52%. Total indirect costs for the organization are $75,000. The supported employment program's budgeted share = 9.52% of $75,000 ($7,140).

** A supported employment program can be implemented without a budget item for training for supported employment staff. However, when appropriate and possible, ILCs can arrange for training from technical assistance providers in such areas as how to work with specific populations, on-the-job training methods, and consumer-driven assessment.

Vocational rehabilitation agencies typically reimburse vendors for employment advocate hours spent performing assessment, on-the-job training, regular observation/supervision of the supported employee at the job site, and designated follow-up services that stabilize the individual in her/his job. Employment advocate hours spent performing other supported employment activities will not be billable to vocational rehabilitation. To ensure that the actual costs of the supported employment program will be covered by the funding agency, an actual hourly rate of expense should be determined.

To calculate the actual hourly rate of expense:

Divide Total Supported Employment Costs

by Billable Employment Advocate Hours*

*Billable Employment Advocate hrs = 65% x Total Employment Advocate hrs

In our example:

Total Employment Advocate Hrs = 1,840 hrs* x Number of Advocates
** [(52 wks. x 40 hrs) - 240 hrs (vacation, sick, holiday time) = 1,840]

Total Employment Advocate Hours = 2 x 1,840 hours = 3,680 hours

Billable Employment Advocate hrs = 65% x 3,680 hrs = 2,392 hrs

The actual hourly rate of expense calculates as follows:

Actual hourly rate = $66,970 / 2,392 hrs = $28.00

Vocational rehabilitation agencies commonly have a pre-set rate or range of rates that may be used in reimbursing supported employment vendors. It is critical that ILCs be prepared to negotiate with vocational rehabilitation counselors in order to receive at least the actual hourly rate that reflects the actual cost of providing supported employment services. Contact your state vocational rehabilitation agency for information regarding reimbursement rates and their associated criteria.

Ongoing services are funded with monies from sources other than vocational rehabilitation agencies, e.g., human resource authorities, Social Security Administration, and Title VII-B funds. It is estimated that in the first year of a supported employment program that 10%-20% of the employment advocates' time will be spent providing ongoing services. Arrangements for funds for ongoing services must be planned and agreed upon ahead of time. Supported employment programs that provide ongoing services commonly receive funds via hourly rate of intervention agreements or a year of program service contract. The estimated yearly cost of providing ongoing services in a start-up year can be calculated as follows:

0.10 - 0.20 (10%-20%) x Total Supported Employment Cost

In our example this calculates as: 0.15 (15%) x $66,970 = $10,045.50

ILCs can pursue funding from external sources that provides the total yearly projected cost of ongoing services (year of program service contract), or arrange hourly rate of service agreements with funding agencies.

Agencies that fund supported employment via hourly rate of intervention units will enter into formal fee-for-service agreements with the supported employment vendor. This agreement will contain information about the hourly rate of reimbursement, the number of hours being contracted for, and the billable activities for a given consumer. ILCs can negotiate with the agency about the cycle of billing that best suits their cash flow requirements. State agencies generally require that bills submitted for payment document the number of employment advocate hours spent performing the agreed-upon activities with each consumer. At the time of billing these agencies may also require a progress report that describes in detail the activities and progress of each consumer. In order to meet the billing requirements of funding agencies, supported employment advocates must keep detailed and accurate records of time spent performing each supported employment activity. ILCs must establish cost centers and accounting methods that will provide the information required by funding authorities. [See the end of this section for examples of a fee-for-service agreement and invoices for services rendered.]

TEXAS COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
PURCHASE OF SERVICE AGREEMENT

This agreement implements the purchase of Supported Employment services for _________________ (referred to as the "client"). The services will be purchased by the Texas Commission for the Blind (referred to as the "Commission"). The services will be provided by ___________________ (referred to as the "Vendor"). The following provisions will apply to this agreement:

I. TYPES OF SERVICES

Supported Employment services provided by the Vendor to Commission clients may include any or all of the following services:

a) client assessment to determine appropriateness for supported employment
b) job development and job placement
c) job skills training and related services that are needed to support trainees (clients) in employment, such as
    - intensive on-the-job training and other training provided by skilled job trainers (coaches),
    - follow-up services including regular contact with employers, parents, guardians, or other client representatives, and other suitable professional and informed advisors in order to reinforce and stabilize the job placement, and
    - regular observation or supervision of supported employment clients at the work site.

The Vendor must provide/arrange for the extended Supported Employment services of:

d) on-going support to include continuous or periodic skill training provided at least twice monthly at the work site as long as the client is employed in that job; on-going support can also include other support services provided at or away from the work site (such as transportation, personal care services, and counseling to family members) as long as skill training services are also needed by, and provided to, the individual at the work site. On-going support services are to be provided after the Commission closes the case and reimbursement from Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) ceases.

(Refer to Title VI, Section C of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, and the current Commission for the Blind guidelines for details of supported employment services.)

II. COST OF SERVICES

The payment of fees for services in Section I, parts a,b,c, will be contingent upon the availability of Federal funds. The Vendor will be informed by the appropriate Commission Regional Supervisor in the event appropriated funds are not available. The Vendor agrees to provide/ arrange for the services and associated costs specified in Section I, part d for as long as the client is employed in that job.

The following costs and terms apply to payment for services:

a) Job Coach Fees

Within the Funding Restrictions noted below, the Commission will reimburse the Vendor for job coach services based on documented contact hours as follows:

- $_____ per contact hour as negotiated between the VR Counselor and Vendor.

(See Attachment A for Preferred Job Coach Skills)

When services are simultaneously provided to multiple clients, the Vendor will bill on a prorated basis.

b) Mileage and Per Diem Expenses

The Commission may reimburse the Vendor for mileage and per diem expenses incurred in provided services according to the State of Texas Travel Regulations (for employees) and Official Mileage Guide. All overnight travel must be approved in advance by the appropriate Commission Regional Supervisor. Travel time is not an allowable expense for reimbursement.

When required travel involves multiple contacts, the Vendor will bill on a prorated basis.

c) On-going Support/Extended Services

The Vendor agrees to arrange or provide for the services and associated costs for the on-going support as identified in Section I, part d. The Vendor maintains the responsibility for the on-going support services as long as the client is employed in that job.

III. FUNDING/PAYMENT RESTRICTIONS

The Commission will not be responsible for payment of services unless the Vendor has received authorization from the VR Counselor prior to the provision of services each month.

For payment processing, the Vendor will submit a statement of services rendered and a client progress report to the VR Counselor on a monthly basis. The statement and the report must be in a form acceptable to the Commission.

Organizations certify that the Commission will not be billed for services being paid for from other federal fund sources.

VR funds may be used for payment of Supported Employment services for up to 18 months from the first day of a client's employment. The months do not have to be consecutive. In addition, the Commission may allow reimbursement for pre-employment services (client assessment and job development/placement) not to exceed 90 days without Commission Regional Supervisor approval.

Job development activities exceeding thirty (30) days hours per client placement require approval through the Commission Regional Supervisor, and before the additional services are provided.

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors may approve up to 200 hours of job coach hours per client based on the recommendations of the Vendor. Commission Regional Supervisors may approve additional job coach hours based on the needs of the client as recommended by the job coach and agreed upon by the counselor.

IV. MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Both the Commission and the Vendor agree that neither will discriminate in employment, services, or benefits because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, or disability.

Both the Commission and the Vendor will maintain confidentiality in all client information, safeguard records, and share client information only as it relates to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. Both the Commission and the Vendor will maintain their respective records for at least three years regarding services provided and fees paid.

V. TERMINATION

Services leading to supported employment may be terminated by the client, the Commission or the Vendor. Seven working days will be required for termination. Mutual communication among the three parties will be required for termination.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

This agreement is effective at the signature dates below, and will remain in effect for up to 21 months (90 days for assessment/job development; 18 months from the date of employment), or until the services are terminated by the client, the Commission or the Vendor.

TEXAS COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

____

VR Counselor Date

____

Regional Supervisor Date

VENDOR

_______________________________________ _______________________________

Organization Name Representative's Title

____

Representative's Signature Date

Attachment A

TEXAS COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
PREFERRED JOB COACH SKILLS

GENERAL:

- Experience in interacting with disabled persons in personal, social, educational or work settings. Experience in training disabled workers on jobs is preferred.
- Knowledge about employer expectations, public relations, and the needs of disabled workers.
- Willingness to advocate for disabled workers through community resources, the employer, the family, and vocational rehabilitation professionals.
- Ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing.

SPECIFIC:

- Ability to learn adaptive techniques for training people with a visual loss, and other disabling conditions.
- Job coaches assigned duties of job development/job placement must have experience or training in job development/job placement.
- Possess organizational skills for timely completion of reports on client progress.

(8/90)

ARCIL

Austin Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc.
5555 North Lamar, Suite J125
Austin, Texas 78751
(512) 476-0744
(Voice/TTY)

SOUTHWEST EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY
JOHN WESTBROOK
211 EAST SEVENTH STREET
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701

INVOICE DATE: September 7, 1990
INVOICE NUMBER: 9101
PURCHASE ORDER #: 28071
INVOICE PERIOD: August 1-31, 1990

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	RATE	TOTAL
SENIOR EMPLOYMENT ADVOCATE	184.00	18.10	3330.40
EMPLOYMENT ADVOCATE	177.00	15.50	2743.50
TOTAL INVOICE:			**6073.90**

§ **SEE ATTACHED TIME SHEETS AS SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION.** §

Contract Period:	August 1, 1990 to January 31, 1991
Contract Amount:	$34,944.00 =========
Cumulative Requests:	$ 6, 073.90
Amount Requested This Period:	$ 6,073.90

I CERTIFY THAT THIS REPORT IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

SIGNATURE DATE

ARCIL

Austin Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc.
5555 North Lamar, Suite J125
Austin, Texas 78751
(512) 476-0744
(Voice/TTY)

TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION
HARRY LUNDELL
ROUND ROCK FIELD OFFICE
2000 N. MAYS, SUITE 110
ROUND ROCK, TEXAS 78664

INVOICE DATE: September 10, 1990
INVOICE NUMBER: 9101 **INVOICE PERIOD:** August 1-31, 1990

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	RATE	TOTAL
JOB COACH SERVICES			
460-08-9778	49.00	20.00	980.00
Credit from invoice #9013			**-139.60**
449-55-0972	18.50	16.00	296.00
TOTAL INVOICE:			**1136.40**

§ SEE ATTACHED JOB COACH TIME LOG AS SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION §

I CERTIFY THAT THIS REPORT IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

SIGNATURE DATE

Summary

The Social Security Administration (SSA) incentive-to-work programs provide funding for supported employment services, continuity of eligibility for certain benefits, and maintenance of Medicaid benefits for qualified supported employees.

Major Points

- Incentive-to-work programs are available to qualified recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits.
- A Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) is an SSI work incentive that permits persons with disabilities to set aside income and/or resources to be used to achieve a specific work goal.
- A PASS can be established for education, vocational training, starting a business, or purchasing support services that enable a person with a disability to work and obtain a specific work goal. This may include supported employment advocate services.
- An Impairment-Related Work Expense (IRWE) is a work incentive available to SSDI or SSI recipients that helps individuals with disabilities recover some of the expenses that are incurred in support of their work activities.
- For an IRWE deduction to be allowable, the expenses must be:
  - directly related to enabling the individual to work where such expenses are not generally required by non-disabled individuals in the community

  - paid by the individual and not reimbursable from any other source
  - paid in a month in which the individual is or was working
  - reasonable.

- The Student Earned Income Exclusion under the SSI program allows a person under age 22 and regularly attending school to exclude up to $400 of earned income per month (up to a maximum of $1,620) in determination of SSI monthly benefits.
- By establishing a PASS or an IRWE for supported employment expenses, an individual who had previously not qualified for SSI or SSDI may become eligible for these benefits. Application for a work-incentive and SSI/SSDI benefits can be made at the same time.
- Section 1619(a) of the Social Security Act allows special SSI cash payments to persons with disabilities already on the rolls in place of their regular SSI payments, as long as their total paid monthly income falls below the break-even point (currently set at $899 per month for a single individual with no other earned or unearned income); once this monthly paid income level is exceeded, all SSI payments will stop.
- Section 1619(b) of the Social Security Act continues Medicaid coverage for working persons with disabilities and blindness under age 65 (if the state provides Medicaid coverage to SSI eligibles) when their earnings become high enough to cause SSI cash benefits or federally-administered state supplementary payments to stop.

DISCUSSION

The incentive-to-work programs of the Social Security Administration are available to persons with disabilities who are eligible for

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

Section 1619(a) of the Social Security Act provides for special SSI cash payments to individuals already on SSI rolls even when their total earned monthly income exceeds the SGA level (currently \$500 per month), up to the break even point. The break even point is currently \$899 per month for a single individual with no other earned or unearned income. For an individual earning \$801 per month, the SSI benefit check is calculated as follows:

\$ 801	total earned monthly income
- 20	general exclusion
781	
- 65	earned income exclusion
716	

\$716 divided by 2 = \$358 countable income

\$ 407	Federal Benefit Rate (single)
-358	countable income
\$ 49	SSI benefit check

Total monthly income = \$801 + \$49 = \$850.

Should an individual's earned monthly income reach \$899 or more, all SSI payments under 1619(a) will cease.

To qualify for this incentive the person must continue to have the original disability under which SSI eligibility was first determined, and currently meet all other eligibility rules, including the income and resources tests. (This work incentive does not apply to SSI recipients who are blind because the SGA requirement does not apply under SSI to individuals who are blind.) The importance of this incentive is not only the possible provision of benefits to individuals earning more than \$500 per month via 1619(a) status, but the fact that individuals remain eligible for regular SSI benefits should their earned income drop below the \$500 level. Because there is no time limit on the number of months for which this provision can apply, it can help mitigate the uncertainty about financial stability that some SSI recipients may have about supported employment, and it eliminates a time-consuming re-application for regular SSI benefits should earned monthly income drop below the individually calculated break-even point. Persons who receive this special SSI cash benefit are SSI recipients for all purposes, including Medicaid eligibility determinations.

Section 1619(b) protects Medicaid benefits (if the state provides Medicaid coverage to persons eligible for SSI) when earnings become too high to qualify for SSI cash payments but are not high enough to offset the loss of Medicaid. This incentive continues Medicaid coverage for persons with disabilities who are under age 65, when their earned income becomes high enough to cease cash benefits or federally administered state supplementary SSI payments. To qualify for extended Medicaid coverage under Section 1619(b), a person must:

- have a disability or continue to be blind
- need Medicaid in order to work
- not be able to afford benefits equivalent to the SSI and Medicaid coverage the person would be eligible for if he or she were not working
- meet all non-disability requirements for SSI payments other than earnings.

The SSA uses amounts called "thresholds" to determine whether a person's earnings are sufficient to replace the SSI and Medicaid benefits lost due to work. These threshold amounts vary from state to state and are available from local Social Security offices. They are based on the level of earnings necessary to stop SSI payments and the estimated annual per capita Medicaid expenditures for the state. If earnings exceed the threshold for the state in which the person resides, an individualized threshold can be calculated if the person has:

- an IRWE
- a PASS
- publicly funded attendant care

- Medicaid expenses above the state per capita amount

The importance of this provision lies in its authorization of continued Medicaid benefits for qualified individuals who are working and can not afford or obtain comparable health insurance benefits.

The Student Earned Income Exclusion authorizes individuals under the age of 22 to exclude an amount of earned income (up to $400 per month with a yearly maximum of $1,620) from countable wages that are used to determine the amount of SSI benefit the individual qualifies for. A Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) and/or an Impairment-Related Work Expense can be used to underwrite approved supported employment services. With these two options, the consumer purchases some of his/her own supported employment services. The establishment of a PASS or an IRWE provides ways for the consumer to recoup some or all of these expenses through exclusions or set-asides in SSI and/or SSDI benefit determinations.

In general, a PASS will provide for more reimbursement of supported employment expenses than an IRWE, and is the preferred work-incentive for funding intensive, time-limited services if both PASS and IRWE are available to use. However, a PASS is a time-limited program. An IRWE can be used to recoup some of the costs of supported employment advocate services during the ongoing phase; a PASS can also be used under appropriate circumstances. All work-incentives must be applied for before the first day of work and approved by the Social Security Administration.

The ILC that provides supported employment services to consumers who purchase these services themselves as part of a PASS or IRWE must bill the consumer. This bill when paid (and marked paid by the ILC) is a receipt the consumer retains and must be able to produce upon demand. It should include the nature, dates, amount, and dollar value of the services rendered. It is the consumer who pays the ILC for its services.

The Student Earned Income Exclusion, PASS, and IRWE provisions will be discussed on the following pages.

Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

Establishing a PASS allows individuals to set aside income and/or resources to be used to achieve a specific work goal through education, vocational training, starting a business, or purchasing support services that enable a person to work (e.g., supported employment services). The purpose of a PASS is to increase an individual's income producing capability, thereby reducing reliance on government benefits at the end of the PASS. To qualify for a PASS, an individual must:

- be disabled or blind
- meet all eligibility requirements for SSI, with the exception of the income and/or resources tests
- have earnings, unearned income, or resources available to set aside in the PASS, e.g., wages, SSDI payments, private pensions, or gifts or monetary support from family or friends

In order for a PASS to be approved by the SSA, there must be a reasonable chance that the person can achieve the stated occupational goal **and** a clear connection between a person's occupational goal and increased earning capacity at the end of the PASS. A PASS makes it financially feasible for a person with a disability to set aside or save income and/or resources to reach an expressed occupational goal by enabling him/her to become eligible for SSI, to maintain eligibility, or to receive higher SSI payments while working towards greater self-sufficiency. It is important to note that by establishing a PASS for supported employment services a consumer may either qualify for SSI benefits that were previously denied, or maintain/increase the level of benefit he/she received before establishing a PASS.

In the PASS program, the worker pays the cost of designated supported employment services and it is deducted from the person's income in calculating the amount of the SSI benefit. In order for income and resources to be excluded in the determination of the benefit amount, a written application must be submitted for approval to a local office of the Social Security Administration and must contain:

- a specific occupational objective
- a plan for disbursement of savings or other resources toward reaching the objective
- a specific time period in which the occupational objective will be achieved
- a method for identifying and setting aside any money or resources that will be devoted toward accomplishing the occupational objective

An example of a supported employment occupational goal for a PASS is: To work in competitive employment as a data entry clerk with no more than 6 hours of job coach services per month.

A PASS can initially be written to cover a maximum period of 18 months; one additional 18-month extension is possible, followed by one possible 12-month extension after that, if the completion of a lengthy educational or vocational training program is involved. In all, the length of a PASS may not exceed a total of 48 months. Each PASS includes the total dollar amount of expected supported employment expenses. This total amount can be averaged over the length of the PASS to provide an equal exclusion for each month. (For example, total employment advocate expenses over the initial 18-month PASS may be provided through intensive hours the first few months with fading occurring over the rest of the period. The total employment advocate expense for the entire 18 months is $2400, 120 hours @ $20 per hour. Averaging this $2400 over the 18 months of the PASS allows a monthly exclusion, in this case, of approximately $133 per month.)

Some examples of eligible services under a PASS include:

- purchasing employment advocate services to assist in obtaining and maintaining employment
- purchasing job related equipment, uniforms, or other items
- transportation expenses
- attendant care
- any other services or equipment required to support an individual in a work-related manner

(APSE, 1990, p. 54)

The following example illustrates the calculation of the SSI benefit check and total income for a single individual with an established PASS earning $600 per month and purchasing employment advocate expenses for $200 per month. As a single individual, this person qualifies for the Federal Benefit Rate of $407 per month.

$600.00 Wages
- 85.00 General Exclusion ($20) and Earned Income Exclusion ($65)

$515.00 Divided by 2 = $257.50

$257.50
-200.00 Employment Advocate Expenses

$ 57.50 Countable Wages

$407.00 Federal Benefit Rate
- 57.50 Countable Wages

$349.50 SSI Check

Total Income Received by Individual = $600.00 + $349.50 = $949.50

Total Usable Income = \$949.50 - \$200 (Employment Advocate Expenses)
= \$749.50

Without working in a supported employment position, this individual's Total and Usable Income = \$407 (the amount of the SSI benefit check).

Impairment-Related Work Expense (IRWE)

The IRWE is a work incentive available to SSI recipients and SSDI beneficiaries that helps individuals with disabilities recover some of the expenses incurred in support of their work activities. These expenses must be paid for directly by the person with a disability. Expenses for eligible services are deductible even if they are also needed for daily living, but they would not be necessary for individuals without disabilities to gain and maintain employment.

IRWEs can apply to both SSDI beneficiaries and SSI recipients. Using an IRWE allows for payment of specific costs to be excluded in calculating Countable Earnings and Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA). For an SSDI beneficiary, deducting an IRWE may keep monthly gross earnings below SGA thereby maintaining SSDI benefits. For an SSI recipient, deducting an IRWE from monthly gross wages may increase the SSI cash payment the individual can receive. Deducting the cost of an IRWE may also be used in the initial eligibility determination for SSDI and/or SSI to reduce an individual's income and qualify her/him under the Substantial Gainful Activity test.

Some examples of items or services that would generally qualify as Impairment-Related Work Expenses are:

- services provided by a supported employment advocate to help an individual to obtain or maintain gainful employment

- attendant care services provided to prepare for work, on the trip to and from work, on the work site, or after work

- costs for structural or operational modifications to a vehicle in order to drive or be driven to work, even if the vehicle is also used for non-work related activities

- costs for driver assistance or transport by taxi when lower-cost public transportation is not feasible or available

- medical devices such as wheelchairs, respirators, traction equipment, or braces

- work-related equipment or accommodations such as page turning devices, reading aids for persons with visual impairments, or adaptations to work tools

- salary for a reader or interpreter

- routine drugs or medical services, such as regularly prescribed medical treatment or therapy that is necessary for control of a disability

- expendable medical supplies

- diagnostic procedures, the objective of which is related to the control, treatment, or evaluation of a disability

- residential modifications (e.g., ramps, railings, pathways) for an individual employed outside the home, or expenses necessary to create a work space that accommodates a person's disability, for an individual employed in the home

The following example illustrates the calculation of the SSI benefit check and total income for a single individual using the IRWE provision, earning $600 per month, and purchasing employment advocate expenses for $200 month. As a single individual, this person qualifies for the Federal Benefit Rate of $407 per month.

$600.00 Wages
- 85.00 General Exclusion ($20) and Earned Income Exclusion ($65)

$515.00
-200.00 Employment Advocate Expenses

$315.00

$315.00 Divided by 2 = $157.50 Countable Wages

$407.00 Federal Benefit Rate
-157.50 Countable Wages

$249.50 SSI Check

Total Income Received by this Individual = $600.00 + $249.50
= $849.50.

Total Usable Income = $849.50 - $200.00 (Employment Advocate Expenses)
= $649.50.

Without working in a supported employment position, this individual's Total and Usable Income = $407 (the amount of the SSI benefit check).

The table at the end of this section compares the use of a PASS and an IRWE for this individual.

SSDI beneficiaries are given a 9-month trial period that allows them to test their ability to work and continue to receive their SSDI benefit, regardless of the amount of their monthly earnings. After nine months of trial work (months in which earnings exceed $200), they will receive a continuing disability review to determine if they are engaging in substantial gainful activity (Countable Gross Earnings over $500 per month). In determining whether a supported employee is engaging in SGA, many factors must be considered including the use of subsidies to lower earnings below SGA. If individuals are determined to be engaging in SGA at the time of the review, their benefit check will stop after three grace periods. The following example illustrates that an IRWE may enable an SSDI beneficiary earning over the SGA level to receive an SSDI benefit check by reducing the amount of monthly gross earnings below the SGA level.

The following example illustrates the effect of an IRWE on a given SSDI beneficiary (APSE, 1991). Ms. Smith, a person with a disability receiving an SSDI benefit of $450 per month, works in a supported employment position in the community earning $660 per month. During her 9-month trial period, her monthly income consists of her earnings plus her SSDI benefit check ($660 + $450 = $1,110). It is assumed that vocational rehabilitation or other human resources agency provided funding for supported employment services during this time. The continuing disability review determines that Ms. Smith is engaging in Substantial Gainful Activity as her earnings are in excess of $500. Ms. Smith enters the extended period of eligibility (EPE), which will last for 36 months. Ms. Smith will receive her SSDI check for the three-month grace period and then it will stop. However, Ms. Smith arranges to pay for the 8 hours of supported employment follow-along services she receives each month. At $25 per hour the services will cost $200 per month. The expense is approved by the SSA as an IRWE. In making a determination of SGA each month the dollar amount of the IRWE is subtracted from Ms. Smith's gross monthly earnings.

$660.00	Gross Monthly Earnings
-200.00	IRWE for Employment Advocate expenses
$460.00	Amount of monthly gross earnings counted in making determination of SGA

Since Ms. Smith's countable earnings are less than the SGA level ($500 per month), Ms. Smith is determined to **not** be engaging in SGA and for each subsequent month that her IRWE expense reduces her gross earning below the SGA level, Ms. Smith's monthly income will consist of her earnings **plus** her SSDI check. With earnings continuing to be reduced below SGA, her EPE will continue beyond the minimum of 36 months.

Total Income = $660.00 + $450.00 = $1110.00
Total Usable Income = $1110.00 - $200.00 (Employment Advocate
= $910.00 Expenses

After the 9-month trial work period and the 3-month grace period, Ms. Smith's income without the IRWE for employment advocate expenses would be $660 (her Gross Wages), because she would no longer be eligible for her SSDI benefit since her income of $660 is in excess of SGA level.

Student Earned Income Exclusion

The Student Earned Income Exclusion provision of the SSI program allows a person under age 22 and regularly attending school to exclude up to $400 of earned income per month (up to a maximum of $1,620 per year or an average of $135 per month) in order to determine the amount of the monthly SSI benefit check. This exclusion is applied before any others. As with the other incentive programs the student earned income exclusion must be applied for and approved by the SSA.

In general, "regularly attending school" means that the person takes one or more courses of study and attends classes:

- in a college or university for 8 hours per week; or
- in grades 7 - 12 for 12 hours per week; or
- in a training course to prepare for employment for 12 hours per week (15 hours per week if the course involves shop practice); or
- for less time than indicated above for reasons beyond the student's control, such as illness.

The following example illustrates the student exclusion.

Jerri Smith is a 19 year-old special education student who begins working in a supported employment job earning $550 per month in gross wages. She lives at home with her parents.

$550 Gross Wages
-135 Student Earned Income Exclusion ($1,620 yearly maximum / 12)

$415
- 85 General Exclusion ($20) and Earned Income Exclusion ($65)

$330 Divided by 2 = $165 Countable Wages

$271.34 In-kind Support FBR
-165.00 Total Countable Income
$106.34 SSI Check

Total Income = $550 + $106.34 = $656.34.

Total Income without the Student Exclusion would be $550.
(APSE, 1991, pp. 7-8)

(Note that a PASS or IRWE could be established to pay for supported employment advocate services if necessary and entered into the calculation as appropriate.)

Much of the information contained in this section was adapted from documents prepared by the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) : Transition Package for Supported Employment Funding -- *Using Student Earned Income Exclusion and Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)*, February 1, 1991; IRWE Package, 2nd edition -- *Utilization of the Social Security Work Incentive: Impairment-Related Work Expense*, February 1, 1991; *PROJECT WIN work incentives network training manual*. (1990). Richmond, VA: APSE.

PASS Vs. IRWE

An individual is single and qualifies for a Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) of $407 per month. She earns $600 per month and purchases employment advocate services for $200 per month.

PASS	IRWE
$600 wages - 20 general exclusion - 65 earned income exclusion $515	$600 wages - 20 general exclusion - 65 earned income exclusion $515
$515 divided by 2 = $257.50	$515 -200 employment advocate exclusion $315
$257.50 -200.00 employment advocate exclusion $57.50 countable wages	$315 divided by 2 = $157.50 countable wages
$407.00 FBR -57.50 countable wages $349.50 SSI check	$407.00 FBR -157.50 countable wages $249.50 SSI check
Total Income = $600.00 + $349.50 = $949.50	Total Income = $600.00 + $249.50 = $849.50
Usable Income = $949.50 - $200.00 = $749.50	Usable Income = $849.50 - $200.00 = $649.50

Summary

Employers, community-based businesses, and consumers can provide funds for selected supported employment services.

Major Points

- Employers that hire individuals comprising a supported employment enclave usually agree to pay a designated amount to the enclave as a whole, based on the rate of production guaranteed by the agency providing the enclave.

- Businesses that contract with a mobile work crew usually agree to a specific price for the services provided by the work crew, (e.g., cleaning, landscaping, data entry, inventory taking).

- Proper calculation of contracts for work to be performed by mobile work crews or enclaves will produce funds for fair compensation to workers as well as meet the other costs of doing business.

- The employer who hires one supported employee may be willing to pay for required ongoing services, i.e, on-the-job observation and retraining.

- In the absence of funding from external sources or as a matter of preference, supported employment consumers can bear some of the cost of supported employment services that allow them to maintain and/or improve their employment options.

Discussion

The Independent Living Center that offers a mobile work crew or enclave model of supported employment can pursue funding from a vocational rehabilitation agency and other human resources authorities. (In fact, the ILC providing a mobile work crew may require start-up funds from these agencies in order to purchase the needed equipment and supplies, e.g, a van, lawn mowers, vacuum cleaners, special uniforms.) The ILC can allocate Title VII-B funds and assist individual supported employees in establishing a PASS or IRWE with the Social Security Administration. In addition, the ILC can designate portions of the monies received from the host business of the enclave or businesses purchasing the services of the mobile work crew to pay for certain expenses of the enclave or mobile work crew.

The funds collected by an Independent Living Center for the work performed by a mobile work crew or an enclave must be distributed by the Center in a fair and documented fashion. It is essential that supervisors within crews and enclaves document the productivity of each worker. Supervisors should determine that all workers will be paid equally per hour worked *or* productivity measure (usually derived in comparison to the production rate of a nondisabled worker) will be used to determine the amount of earnings each worker will receive. A waiver from the U.S. Department of Labor must be received in advance for a Center to pay any worker less than the Federal Minimum Wage. Having done this, the Center can then use its remaining funds that were collected to pay for the expenses of doing business including Employment Advocate hours worked, supplies used, travel expenses, indirect costs, and other legitimate costs of doing business as an enclave or mobile work crew.

Employers of one supported employee may be willing to pay for some of the costs of ongoing services for that employee. This would typically involve the payment of supported employment advocate hours spent providing retraining, observation, problem-solving, and advocacy at the job site.

Finally, the consumer can pay for some of the expenses involved in maintaining or improving her/his employment options. In the absence of other external funds, the consumer may find it feasible to bear some of the necessary costs of supported employment. The cost of some attendant care may fall into this category of expense. Other consumers may elect to pay for some of their expenses as a matter of choice. In either instance, the individual is purchasing employment-related goods and services as an empowered consumer, with all of the accompanying responsibilities and rights. In fact, these consumers will not only have the right to direct the supported employment process in general (discussed in this manual as the consumer-driven approach), but can direct those aspects which he/she is purchasing directly in even more specific ways, e.g., paying for the services of a personally-chosen employment advocate. The supported employment program and staff should respect and respond to these consumers with a sensitivity to this empowerment. In some ways, consumers who pay for some of their own supported employment expenses have taken another step into mainstream community living.

Chapter 4

Implementation of Supported Employment within the ILC

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Summary

Supported employment services can be incorporated into the usual flow of activity within an Independent Living Center.

Major Points

- A common stream of activity (through time) within an ILC includes the following:
    - Application/Referral - Intake
    - Orientation
    - General Consumer Needs Assessment
    - Independent Living Plan Development
    - Independent Living Plan Implementation
    - Independent Living Plan Addendum/Modification
    - Independent Living Plan Assessment
    - Independent Living Plan Revision or Re-Development
- Most supported employment-related activities can be assimilated into these typical ILC activities.
- Some supported employment activities can be inserted into this flow to provide a structure that facilitates supported employment and independent living service delivery.
- The following flow of activity includes and highlights the addition of supported employment:

Phase I -- Initial, Intensive Services

- Application/Referral - Intake: includes attention to supported employment

- Orientation

    (1) Independent Living services components

    (2) Supported Employment services

- General Consumer Needs Assessment

    (1) Independent Living

    (2) Supported employment

- Independent Living Plan Development

    (1) Activity areas include attendant services, instructional/transitional services, community resource services, housing services, transportation/mobility services, living skills, services, community integration services, supported employment services.

    (2) Activity areas include prerequisites to supported employment across all areas.

- Independent Living Plan Implementation: includes supported employment activities

- Supported Employment Job Development

- Accomplishment of General/Specific Prerequisites for Supported Employment

- Supported Employment Placement

- Independent Living Plan Addendum/Modification: **includes attention to specific on-the-job skills**

- **Supported Employment Ongoing Training/Monitoring/Data Collection**

Phase II -- Ongoing Services

- Independent Living Plan Assessment: **includes attention to maintenance of current supported employment position and career development**

- Independent Living Plan Revision: **includes attention to maintenance of current supported employment position and career development**

- **Ongoing Supported Employment Services, Monitoring of "Red Flags", Case Management**

Discussion

In most ILCs, activities that identify and serve consumer needs and desires are arranged in a logical sequence. There is a natural flow from intake to needs assessment to plan development to plan implementation to ongoing plan assessment and modification. Supported employment services can be assimilated and added to the existing stream of activity. ILC and supported employment staff can work as a team to provide all the services necessary to stabilize and maintain an individual in a supported employment position. As with all other components of the typical independent living center program, supported employment goals, objectives, and activities are reflected on the ILP.

To understand how the process of supported employment can be effectively combined with independent living activities offered by an ILC, it would be useful to consider the following six steps that define a generalized conceptual model for providing supported employment services (adapted from Szymanski *et al.*, 1988):

Phase I: Step 1: Initial Assessment
Step 2: Plan Development
Step 3: Job Placement
Step 4: Training
Phase II: Step 5: Ongoing Support
Step 6: Periodic Assessment

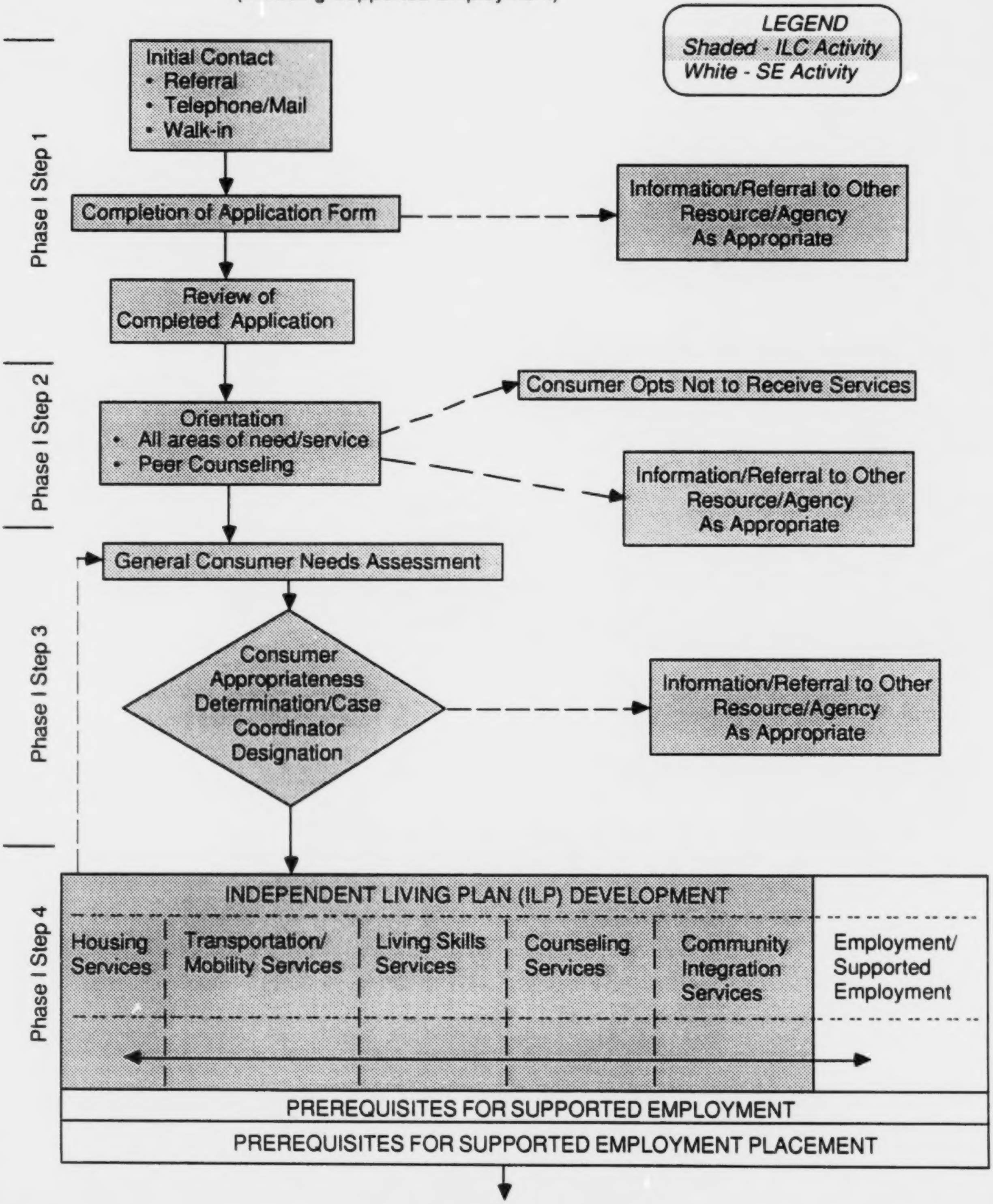
Steps 1 - 4, taken as a unit, describe Phase I services, culminating in the intensive job training of the supported employee on the work site, up to the point at which the employee is thought to be "stabilized" on the job. Steps 5 and 6, taken as a unit, describe Phase II services, beginning with the "fading" process, in which the employment advocate gradually reduces the amount of time spent physically present on the work site. Phase II services continue through the provision of ongoing supports necessary to assist the supported employee to maintain the job placement, along with periodic assessment to ensure continued satisfactory performance and to measure employee satisfaction with the placement.

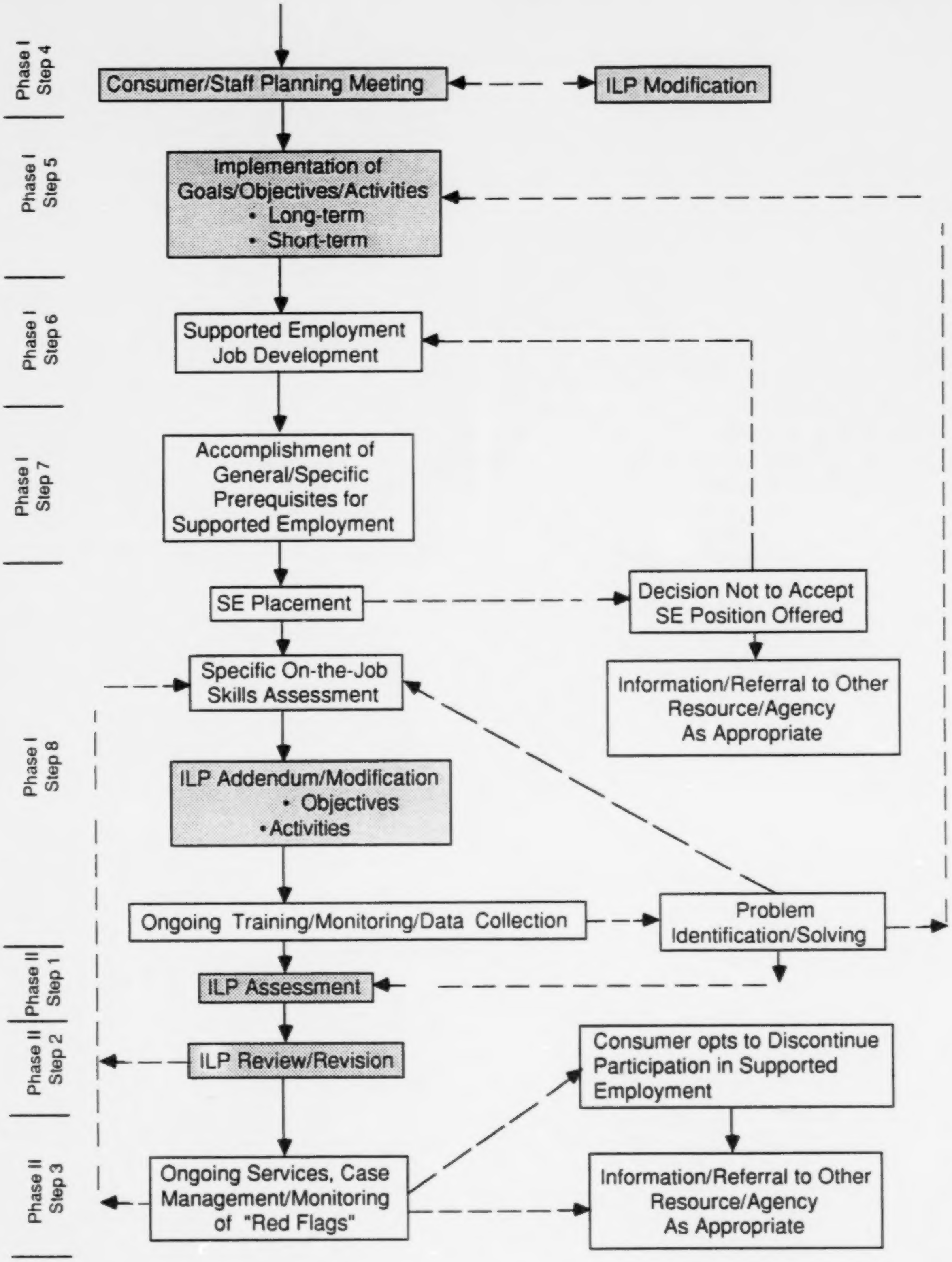
By law, the supported employment services described by the six steps noted previously can continue to be provided to an individual consumer and supported by Title VI, Part C supported employment funds, for up to a maximum of 18 months. At this point in time, if Title VI, Part C supported employment funds have been used, the vocational rehabilitation case will be closed, and continuing ongoing support activities appropriate to help the employee to maintain employment must be provided and paid for by another funding source.

As will be discussed in later portions of this implementation guide, it will be very important for ILC staff members who are providing supported employment services to be strong advocates for consumers in negotiating with funding agencies. Based on individual consumer patterns of need for services, ILC staff must work to ensure that funding for necessary supported employment services can be secured and maintained for an appropriate period of time, up to a maximum of 18 months.

The following flow chart represents a suggested independent living center activity overview that assimilates the six generalized steps of supported employment described earlier within a "traditional" independent living scheme of activities. Those parts of the flow chart that are shaded represent independent living-related activities or services; those parts of the flow chart that are not shaded represent supported employment-related activities or services. The remaining sections of this chapter separately address each major portion of the assimilated independent living/supported employment activity overview, according to the Phase/Step sequence as noted along the left margin of the flow chart.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER ACTIVITY FLOW CHART
(including Supported Employment)


LEGEND
Shaded - ILC Activity
White - SE Activity
Phase I Step 1
Initial Contact
• Referral
• Telephone/Mail
• Walk-in
Completion of Application Form
Information/Referral to Other Resource/Agency As Appropriate
Review of Completed Application
Phase I Step 2
Orientation
• All areas of need/service
• Peer Counseling
Consumer Opts Not to Receive Services
Information/Referral to Other Resource/Agency As Appropriate
Phase I Step 3
General Consumer Needs Assessment
Consumer Appropriateness Determination/Case Coordinator Designation
Information/Referral to Other Resource/Agency As Appropriate
Phase I Step 4
INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN (ILP) DEVELOPMENT
Housing Services
Transportation/ Mobility Services
Living Skills Services
Counseling Services
Community Integration Services
Employment/ Supported Employment
PREREQUISITES FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
PREREQUISITES FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT


Phase I Step 4
Consumer/Staff Planning Meeting
ILP Modification
Phase I Step 5
Implementation of Goals/Objectives/Activities
• Long-term
• Short-term
Phase I Step 6
Supported Employment Job Development
Phase I Step 7
Accomplishment of General/Specific Prerequisites for Supported Employment
SE Placement
Decision Not to Accept SE Position Offered
Information/Referral to Other Resource/Agency As Appropriate
Phase I Step 8
Specific On-the-Job Skills Assessment
ILP Addendum/Modification
• Objectives
•Activities
Ongoing Training/Monitoring/Data Collection
Problem Identification/Solving
Phase II Step 1
ILP Assessment
Phase II Step 2
ILP Review/Revision
Consumer opts to Discontinue Participation in Supported Employment
Phase II Step 3
Ongoing Services, Case Management/Monitoring of "Red Flags"
Information/Referral to Other Resource/Agency As Appropriate

Summary

An open application and referral process enhances the ability of the Independent Living Center (ILC) to identify and meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Major Points

- Some individuals seek supported employment services from the ILC because of a referral from an agency, such as vocational rehabilitation, that provides funding for supported employment.
- Other individuals are referred to the ILC supported employment program from other organizations, or learn about supported employment services through the ILC itself.
- The application and intake procedure should include items and questions related to supported employment.
- As a matter of policy, Independent Living Centers provide cross-disability services; ideally, ILCs should provide supported employment options for any person with a severe disability, regardless of the nature of the disability, that is, any consumer of the ILC.
- Completed application forms are reviewed by the supported employment advocate and other ILC staff in order to determine appropriate action.
- For individuals interested in supported employment, a determination of funding sources that may be available to meet the supported employment needs of the consumer should be made.

- The individual is scheduled to attend ILC/supported employment orientation(s), or referred to another agency/resource as appropriate.

Discussion

A major policy decision of the Independent Living Center Board of Directors is the determination of who the ILC will serve through its supported employment program. This issue generally centers around the types of disabilities individuals may have. Though some supported employment programs serve certain populations only, model demonstration projects support the provision of cross-disability supported employment services. This would mean that the ILC offers supported employment as an option for any consumer that is eligible for ILC services. Philosophically, to exclude certain persons with disabilities from supported employment within the ILC seems to violate the very philosophy of independent living. In reality, another factor that affects this general eligibility decision is the particular funding mechanism(s) of supported employment in the ILC. The ILC whose commitment to supported employment includes the use of Title VII-B funds can make this decision from a conceptual and philosophical base. However, supported employment services that are funded via state vocational rehabilitation or other outside agencies may be shaped by regulations and priorities of these agencies. In this instance, ILC board members will need to consider the funding issue as they define eligibility criteria for the supported employment program.

ILC application forms and intake procedures include items about supported employment. The completed forms are reviewed by the supported employment advocate and other ILC staff. When necessary, possible funding sources are identified. The consumer is then either scheduled for an ILC and/or supported employment orientation session(s), or referred to another agency as appropriate.

Summary

A public orientation process enhances the ability of a person with a disability to be involved in his/her own Independent Living Plan (ILP) development process.

Major Points

- The Independent Living Center should provide:
    - a structured orientation that describes the major service components of the Independent Living Center, e.g., housing, transportation, attendant care, advocacy, employment-related services
    - a structured orientation to supported employment
    - peer counseling
    - an orientation for family and support group of potential consumers
- At any point within the orientation step, the consumer may opt not to receive services at the ILC and request referral to another agency.

Discussion

General orientation sessions provide the potential consumer with information on the various service components of the ILC. These sessions can also include an introduction and explanation of the Independent Living Plan (ILP) and the organization's procedure for developing that plan. Orientation sessions concerning supported employment present a general overview of supported employment and describe the services offered by the ILC. The ILC can conduct organized orientation sessions several times a month in order to maximize their accessibility. [Attachment I, ***Supported Employment and You***, presents an example of a consumer handbook.]

Peer counseling is offered so that the consumer can talk with another individual with a disability about his/her needs and goals. The ILC staff member can serve as a role model, adviser, and supporter for the potential supported employee. Peer counseling can offer a way for potential consumers to discover and clarify their needs and desires. This initial contact can promote the building of a relationship that lasts throughout the phases of supported employment and other services. Finally, the peer counselor can provide short-term, one-to-one training about the IL program and the ILP, and can determine the level of understanding and confidence the consumer possesses about the program and the planning process.

The family or primary support group of an individual with a severe disability may have questions about supported employment and independent living. An orientation designed to allow them to ask questions can facilitate their understanding of these concepts. They may have difficulty picturing the individual as a worker or be concerned for his/her safety and well-being. There may be concerns about the impact of supported employment on Social Security payments and the family finances in general. They may need assurances that they will be involved in the planning and implementation of services when appropriate. The staff should provide information about the supported employment process and the possible roles of the family in that process. Finally, a case should be made for the importance of maximizing the independence of the consumer as part of the IL and supported employment experience. [Attachment II, ***Supported Employment for the Family***, presents an example of a handbook for families of consumers.]

Summary

Determining an individual's interests, likes and dislikes, skills, talents, and desires will assist in developing the Independent Living Plan (ILP), and enhance the chances of a person enjoying and maintaining her/his placement.

Major Points

- An individualized needs assessment is scheduled for each potential supported employment participant.
- The coordinator of each consumer-identified need area gathers information concerning:
  - level of understanding of ILC activities
  - involvement in other agency activities
  - skills/abilities/supports offered by consumer to facilitate progress in new areas
  - long-term/short-term goals
- Assessment activities that relate to supported employment are designed to determine the consumer's desired type(s) of employment, desired work characteristics, and needs to address in order to obtain desired employment.
- Activities that can provide information about the needs, preferences, and skills of consumers in relation to supported employment are:
  - interviews with the consumer and family

  - completion of informal inventories, verbal and nonverbal
  - volunteer placements in a variety of jobs and environments
  - review of records from the referring and/or funding agency
  - observation of the consumer in a multiple of structured situations

- Supported employment-related assessment information is summarized to create a ***consumer profile*** and an employment-related case file.

- A summary of all consumer-identified need areas is prepared, indicating findings from needs assessments and the ILC's ability to facilitate IL and supported employment processes.

Discussion

The purpose of the assessment phase of independent living and supported employment is to determine the consumer's desired types of employment and work characteristics, needs in relation to those desires, and current skills in each area of IL/supported employment. The ILC must evaluate its ability to meet those needs and preferences. A range of supported employment assessment activities can be utilized, and must include options for persons with limited verbal abilities and limited exposure to the world of work, e.g., nonverbal preference inventories, hands-on activities, and experiences.

A particularly useful assessment technique is the development of a ***consumer profile***, or as it is sometimes called, a functional assessment. Through interviews, observation, review of records, and the use of preference inventories, the supported employment specialist can create a supported employment profile of the individual with severe disabilities.

A ***consumer profile*** can identify and describe the following work-related characteristics:

- past work experience
- general and specific work-related interest areas
- work hours available or preferred
- social survival skills
- parent or guardian level of support
- previous service history
- relevant medical or psychological information
- adaptability to change
- endurance and strength
- time awareness
- functional reading
- communication skills
- ability to handle criticism
- aggressive action or speech
- independent sequencing of job duties
- specific work-related skills
- financial status, potential disincentives
- work attitude/motivation
- general level of mobility/transportation skills/availability
- probable nature and level of ongoing support to maintain employment
- potential reinforcers and relative strengths
- discrimination skills
- independent work rate
- functional math
- appearance
- unusual behaviors
- attention to task; perseverance

(Adapted from Griffin & Levell, 1991 and Buckley, *et al.*, 1988)

Information in the ***consumer profile*** is documented in behavioral terms without judgement or labels. The ***consumer profile*** can then be utilized to determine the level of services that the consumer requires in order to facilitate a successful consumer/job match. The ILC can provide an integrated set of services across all ILC areas that will assist the individual with severe disabilities to obtain and maintain a desired employment option.

It is critical to note that a consumer profile is only a guide. Many times consumers will respond in a way that may not have been demonstrated previously. A consumer profile should never limit the aspirations of any individual interested in supported employment.

Two examples of a consumer profile form are presented on the following pages.

CONSUMER PROFILE

Name: ______________________________ SSN: ______________________

Date: __________________ Evaluator: ________________________________

Please list all the employers for whom you have worked.

Name of Company: ____

Job Title: ____

What did you do? ____

____

____

Dates Worked: From: ____________ To: ____________ Salary: __________

Reason for leaving? ____

Name of Company: ____

Job Title: ____

What did you do? ____

____

____

Dates Worked: From: ____________ To: ____________ Salary: __________

Reason for leaving? ____

What did you like most about your job? _________________________________

____

What did you like least about your job? _________________________________

____

How often were you off work due to illness? ____________________________

_________ Once/twice a week
_________ Once/twice a month
_________ Three or four times a year

If you missed work or were late for work more than once or twice a month, the main reason was because of:

_________ Lack of transportation
_________ Baby-sitter/children problems
_________ Did not like work hours
_________ Did not like job duties/working conditions
_________ Pay was too low
_________ Did not get along with co-workers
_________ Did not get along with boss/supervisor
_________ Sickness/health problems
_________ Other (please specify:

Punctuality - Did you usually arrive to work or appointments

_________ On time
_________ Too early
_________ 15 minutes late
_________ 30 minutes late
_________ 1 hour late
Reason for being late: ______________________________________

TRAINING/EDUCATION

Schools attended:
Name of school: ______________________________________

Graduated: _____ Yes ______ No Year: ____________

Name of school: ______________________________________

Graduated: _____ Yes ______ No Year: ____________

Vocational/Technical School
Name of school: ______________________________________

Graduated: _____ Yes ______ No Year: ____________

Name of school: ______________________________________

Graduated: _____ Yes ______ No Year: ____________

College

Name of school: ____

Graduated: _____ Yes ______ No Year: ___________

Which classes/subjects did you like best? ________________________________

____

____

Which classes did you like least? ______________________________________

____

____

Any special training in the past jobs or school which might be useful?

________ Yes __________ No

What would keep you from a job?

________ Not sure what I really like or want to do
________ No transportation
________ Child care problems
________ Family/friends not supportive
________ Lack of self-confidence
________ Other (Specify:

How do you find it easiest for you to learn about something?

________ Listening to someone talk about it
________ Reading instructions
________ Watching someone else do something first and then trying it myself

Reading (Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometime, D-Difficult, or don't know)

________ I can read regular print
________ I can read regular print with near aids (magnifier, glasses, visualtek)
________ I can read large print
________ I can read large print with near aids (magnifier, glasses visualtek)
________ I can read Braille
Grade 1 ______ Grade 2 ______ Grade 3 ______
________ I use tapes and talking books for reading
________ Someone must read to me

Writing (Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometimes, D-Difficult, or don't know)

__________ I can write notes
__________ I can type notes
__________ I use a slate and stylus to write notes in Braille
__________ I use a Brailler to write notes in Braille
__________ I use a tape recorder for notes
__________ I can write numbers clearly
__________ Other people can read my notes

Speaking (Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometimes, D-Difficult or don't know)

__________ I speak English clearly
__________ I speak Spanish and English clearly
__________ I understand English only
__________ I understand English and Spanish
__________ People can understand my speech
__________ I can hear what people say
__________ When talking on the telephone, I speak clearly
__________ I use the telephone to set up appointments
__________ I use the telephone well
__________ It is easy for me to describe my disabilty
__________ I can talk about the things I am good at doing
__________ I can say "no" to people
__________ I know when to talk, and do not talk too much
__________ I can ask people for help
__________ I can speak easily to people I have not met before

In what jobs/occupations would you like to find work? (List most important first)

____

____

____

What type of work do you want?

__________ Permanent __________ Full Time __________ Days
__________ Temporary __________ Part Time __________ Evenings
__________ Any __________ Hrs. Available __________ Weekends

Endurance - How long can you work?

_________ Light work, many breaks
_________ Light work, few breaks
_________ Full day, many breaks
_________ Full day, few breaks

What are the minimum wages you will accept?

____________ per month

Benefits - C- Currently has N- Needs in employment position

_________ sick leave
_________ medical/health
_________ vacation/annual leave
_________ dental benefits
_________ employee discounts
_________ free/reduced meals
_________ retirement/benefits

What items are the most important to you in a job? Please list the most important as #1, next #2, etc.).

_________ Wages
_________ People you work with
_________ Nature of work
_________ Location of job to my home
_________ Amount of freedom/or minimum supervision
_________ Fringe Benefits (Vacation, Insurance, Holidays)
_________ Work environment
_________ Close supervision

How do you handle criticism/stress?

_________ Do you resist and argue
_________ Withdraw to silence
_________ Accept criticism, but do not change behaviors or concerns
_________ Accept criticism, and change behavior or concerns

Do you think you've had enough training, work experience, skills, education to get the kind of work that you want?

Training	_____ Yes	_____ No
Work experience	_____ Yes	_____ No
Skills	_____ Yes	_____ No
Education	_____ Yes	_____ No

FINANCIAL - What is your present source of income?

_________ Self (savings/work)
_________ Family/Spouse
_________ SSI/SSDI
_________ Public Assistance
_________ None
_________ Other (Specify: ____)

How much money do you need to cover your living expenses and debts you may have?

$ ________ per week $ _______ per month

Do you currently have any judgments or legal action pending against you?

________ Yes _______ No

If yes, explain: ____
____
____

INTEREST/GOALS

(Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometime, D-Difficult, or don't know)
What do you do in your free time?

_________ Hobbies
_________ Read
_________ Sleep
_________ Eat
_________ Participate in community activities

__________ Volunteer to help others
__________ I need someone to help me learn about other leisure activities
__________ Television
__________ Sports
__________ Other ____

ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

(Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometime, D-Difficult, or don't know

__________ I can do my own shopping
__________ I buy and eat healthy foods
__________ I buy my own clothes
__________ I have enough good clothes
__________ I can do laundry to keep my clothes clean
__________ Other people say that my appearance us clean and neat
__________ I pay my bills on time
__________ I live within my budget
__________ I know who to call in an emergency
__________ Other people say my house is neat and clean
__________ I cook my own meals
__________ I live by myself
a.) I live with my ____________________, ______________________ .

FREE TIME ACTIVITIES

(Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometime, D-Difficult, or don't know)

__________ I often go out at night
__________ Do you plan activities for a night out and contact others to participate with you?
__________ Do others call you with plans for a evening out?
__________ It is difficult for me to go out and have a good time
__________ I feel comfortable eating out in restaurants
__________ I like to be around other people
__________ I like to spend time by myself
__________ I get plenty of exercise

MEDICAL/PHYSICAL

Please describe your disability or handicap: ______________________________

____

____

In what ways has your present disability interfered with your ability to work or find a job?

____

____

____

What are your physical limitations?

_________ Sit/Stand in one area
_________ Stairs/Minor obstacles
_________ Walk long distances
_________ Run or walk fast

Are you currently taking any medications? _____ Yes _____No

Name: __________________________ Dosage: ____________________

Times taken a day: ____________________

Allergies: ____

Medication: ____

Reaction to cause: ____

Have you been hospitalized within the last 3 years? _____ Yes ____ No

If yes, explain: ____

____

COMMUNICATION NEEDS

_____ Verbal
_____ Non-verbal
_____ Sign language
_____ Limited vocabulary

______ uses sound/gestures
______ uses key words/signs
______ complete sentences/signs

TRANSPORTATION/MOBILITY

How do you go places?
(Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometime, D-Difficult or don't know)

_____ Family or friends drive me places
_____ I can arrange my own transportation
_____ Someone arranges Special Transit for me
_____ I can arrange and use Special Transit
_____ I can use city buses if I know the route (with training on the route)
_____ Someone must write directions for me to ride the city bus
_____ I can drive but have no car
_____ I drive my car
_____ I have an operator's license or a commercial license
_____ I use a sighted guide in new placess
_____ I must have mobility training to learn a new area
_____ I can easily learn to get around in new places
_____ I can walk places easily and safely
_____ I get lost sometimes
_____ I use distance aids in traveling
_____ When I leave the house, I take my cane
_____ I am afraid when I have to cross a street

When you go somewhere new, can you find your way around?
(Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometime, D-Difficult, or don't know)

_____ In small area
_____ In several rooms
_____ In an entire building
_____ In the building or several buildings and the grounds

What method of transportation will you use to get to work?
(Y-Yes, N-No, S-Sometime, D-Difficult, or don't know)

_____ Special Transit
_____ Mainline Bus
_____ Can you read a bus schedule?
_____ Can you cross a street alone?
_____ Can you cross a 2 lane street with a light?
_____ Can you cross a 2 lane street without a light?
_____ Can you transfer to another bus?

CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT

Do you understand our services? ____ Yes ____No
Are you interested in Supported Employment Services? ____ Yes ____No

COMMENTS: ____

____
____
____
____
____
____

Please overlay your letterhead in this space. The letterhead should designate the supported employment provider, not a state agency which represents more than one provider. Take care not to cover the page number designation or the title of the form. Also, do not change the layout of the form in any way.

CONSUMER EMPLOYMENT SCREENING FORM (Revised 6/90)

Consumer		**Staff Member Completing Form**	
Name:	______________________	Name:	______________________
SSN:	______________________	ID Code:	______________________

Date of screening (month/day/year): __ __ / __ __ / __ __

Type of screening: Initial_____ Ongoing/Employed_____ Ongoing/Unemployed_____

Total number of hours per week presently working: _____ **Months per year:** _____

General Directions: PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY ITEM UNANSWERED!
Indicate the most appropriate response for each item based on observations of the consumer and interviews with individuals who know the consumer (i.e. family members, adult service providers, school personnel, employers).

1. **Availability:** (Circle Yes or No for each item)	Will Work Weekends	Will Work Evenings	Will Work Part-Time	Will Work Full-Time
	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

Specifics/Comments:

2. **Transportation:** (Circle Yes or No for each item)	Transport. Available	Access to Specialized Travel Services	Lives on Bus Route	Family Will Transport	Provides Own Transport. (Bike, Car, Walks, Etc.)
	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

Specifics/Comments:

3. **Strength; Lifting and Carrying:**	Poor (<10 lbs)___	Fair (10-20 lbs)___	Average (30-40 lbs)___	Strong (>50 lbs)___

Specifics/Comments:

4. **Endurance:** (Without Break)	Works < 2 hours___	Works 2-3 hours___	Works 3-4 hours___	Works > 4 hours___

Specifics/Comments:

5. **Orienting:**	Small Area Only___	One Room___	Several Rooms___	Building Wide___	Building and Grounds___

Specifics/Comments:

6. Physical Mobility:	Sits/Stands In One Area___	Fair Ambulation___	Stairs/Minor Obstacles___	Full Physical Abilities___
Specifics/Comments:				
7. Independent Work Rate: (No Prompts)	Slow Pace___	Steady/Average Pace___	Above Average/ Sometimes Fast Pace___	Continual Fast Pace___
Specifics/Comments:				
8.Appearance:	Unkempt/Poor Hygiene___	Unkempt/ Clean___	Neat/Clean but Clothing Unmatched___	Neat/Clean and Clothing Matched___
Specifics/Comments:				
9. Communication:	Uses Sounds/ Gestures___	Uses Key Words/Signs ___	Speaks Unclearly___	Communicates Clearly, Intelligible to Strangers___
Specifics/Comments:				
10. Appropriate Social Interactions:	Rarely Interacts Appropriately___	Polite, Responses Appropriate___	Initiates Social Interactions Infrequently___	Initiates Social Interactions Frequently___
Specifics/Comments:				
11. Unusual Behavior:	Many Unusual Behaviors___	Few Unusual Behaviors___	No Unusual Behaviors___	
Specifics/Comments:				
12. Attention to Task/ Perseverance:	Frequent Prompts Required___	Intermittent Prompts/High Supervision Required___	Intermittent Prompts/Low Supervision Required___	Infrequent Prompts/Low Supervision Required___
Specifics/Comments:				
13. Independent Sequencing of Job Duties:	Cannot Perform Tasks in Sequence___	Performs 2-3 Tasks in Sequence___	Performs 4-6 Tasks in Sequence___	Performs 7 or more Tasks in Sequence___
Specifics/Comments:				
14. Initiative/ Motivation:	Always Seeks Work___	Sometimes Volunteers___	Waits for Directions___	Avoids Next Task___
Specifics/Comments:				

15. Adapting to Change:	Adapts to Change___	Adapts to Change With Some Difficulty___	Adapts to Change With Great Difficulty___	Rigid Routine Required___	
Specifics/Comments:					
16. Reinforcement Needs:	Frequent Required___	Intermittent (daily) Sufficient___	Infrequent (weekly) Sufficient___	Pay Check Sufficient___	
Specifics/Comments:					
17. Family Support:	Very Supportive of Work___	Supportive with Reservations___	Indifferent about Work___	Negative About Work___	
Specifics/Comments:					
18. Consumer's Financial Situation:	Financial Ramifications No Obstacle___	Requires Job With Benefits___	Reduction of Financial Aid is a Concern___	Unwilling to Give Up Financial Aid___	
Specifics/Comments:					
19. Discrimination Skills:	Cannot Distinguish Between Work Supplies___	Distinguishes Between Work Supplies with an External Cue___	Distinguishes Between Work Supplies___		
Specifics/Comments:					
20. Time Awareness:	Unaware of Time and Clock Function___	Identifies Breaks and Lunch___	Can Tell Time to the Hour___	Must Tell Time in Hours and Minutes___	
Specifics/Comments:					
21. Functional Reading:	None___	Sight Words/ Symbols___	Simple Reading___	Fluent Reading___	
Specifics/Comments:					
22. Functional Math:	None___	Simple Counting___	Simple Addition/ Subtraction___	Computational Skills___	
Specifics/Comments:					
23. Independent Street Crossing:	None___	Crosses 2 Lane Street with Light___	Crosses 2 Lane Street W/O Light___	Crosses 4 Lane Street with Light___	Crosses 4 Lane Street W/O Light___
Specifics/Comments:					

24. **Handling Criticism/ Stress:**	Resistive/ Argumentative ___	Withdraws Into Silence ___	Accepts Criticism/Does not Change Behavior ___	Accepts Criticism/ Changes Behavior ___

Specifics/Comments:

25. **Acts/Speaks Aggressively:** Hourly___ Daily___ Weekly___ Monthly___ Never___

Specifics/Comments:

26. **Travel Skills:** (Circle Yes or No for each item)	Requires Bus Training	Uses Bus Independently/ No Transfer	Uses Bus Independently/ Makes Transfer	Able to Make Own Travel Arrangements
	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

Specifics/Comments:

27. **Benefits Consumer Needs** (Circle Yes or No for each choice):

Yes / No 0 = None
Yes / No 1 = Sick Leave
Yes / No 2 = Medical/Health Benefits
Yes / No 3 = Paid Vacation/Annual Leave
Yes / No 4 = Dental Benefits
Yes / No 5 = Employee Discounts
Yes / No 6 = Free or Reduced Meals
Yes / No 7 = Other(Specify):________________________

27. CHECK ALL THAT CONSUMER HAS PERFORMED:

Bus Tables ___
Food Prep. ___
Buffing ___
Dusting ___
Stocking ___

Sweeping ___
Assembly ___
Vacuuming ___
Restroom Cleaning ___
Washing Equipment ___

Dish Machine Use ___
Mopping(Indust.) ___
Food Line Supply ___
Trash Disposal ___
Food Serving ___

"Keeping Busy" ___
Clerical ___
Pot Scrubbing ___
Other ___
____

Medications? ____

Medical Complications/Conditions? ____________________________

____

Additional Comments: ____

____

____

FORM DEVELOPED BY THE REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Summary

Development of an integrated Independent Living Plan (ILP) maximizes growth in independence through the most effective use of Independent Living Center (ILC) resources.

Major Points

- ILC strands appropriate for ILP development are identified through mutual agreement of the consumer and ILC staff.
- The strand coordinator, with consumer representation and input, develops a first draft of a goal and activity sequence for a six-month period of time, including:
    - staff responsible
    - measurements to be used in determining accomplishment of goals
    - expected time frame (month and days) per activity
    - special resources needed to accomplish goal/activity
- If supported employment is a component of the plan, it should identify:
    - prerequisite skills necessary for supported employment placement
    - the expected timeframe for their acquisition
    - supported employment activities of Volunteer Program, Job Club, Business Advisory Committee, or others, as appropriate

- The ILP draft is reviewed for discrepancies or omissions.
- A staffing on the ILP, involving the consumer and/or advocate and all strand coordinators making contribution to the ILP, is held to produce one ILP that assures integration of all strands and the best "building block" approach to development across strands.
- The ILP is formalized and reviewed with the consumer and/or advocate.

Discussion

Based on information collected during initial assessment activities, strand coordinators and the consumer develop goals, objectives, and activities designed to meet the IL and employment desires of the individual. Depending on the work and life experiences of consumers, these goals and activities can vary dramatically. Consumers can require different levels of assistance and training in achieving personal goals in such areas as housing, transportation, life skills, community integration, and employment (including supported employment), among others.

The Independent Living Plan Development chart at the end of this section demonstrates an integrated system of ILC area service delivery, including supported employment. This model of ILP development represents a departure from the typical ILP with the inclusion of supported employment as an activity area and the inclusion of "prerequisites for supported employment and supported employment placement" across all activity strands. The "prerequisites" provide a structure within which to focus activities in all areas on supported employment and a specific supported employment placement. For example, an individual receiving general IL transportation services might receive an orientation to the area's available options without particular attention to work-related travel. As the individual becomes more focused on supported employment, transportation assistance might focus on other options and skills that are required to travel to and from work on a daily basis. When an employer is known, the individual will need to learn to travel to and from a specific work site.

In this ILP model, goals and objectives in all areas of the ILP become increasingly more focused on supported employment and a specific supported employment placement.

Other important aspects of the suggested ILP development approach is an integration of activity area services and the use of a "building block" approach to ILP development. Rather than address only one area at a time, this model suggests consumer involvement across activity areas simultaneously. Consumers may need to obtain general skills and knowledge in certain activity areas before addressing more specific supported employment-related skills, or before actual placement in a job. In other words, consumers, like everyone else, need some preparation for stepping into the world of work. With careful attention and thought to the needs of specific consumers, ILC staff can develop an ILP that will facilitate a successful supported employment placement by utilizing this "building block" approach.

Within the supported employment activity strand, the components of a Job Club, a Volunteer Program, and a Business Advisory Committee are activities that enhance the individual's ability to choose, secure, and maintain a successful supported employment position. Consumers can take part in some or all of these activities as part of their supported employment experience.

The Job Club concept as suggested here is a departure from the Azrin and Besalel Job Club (1990), and is a medium for providing a variety of information and experiences that relate to selecting and maintaining a supported employment position. Individuals with severe disabilities with limited work experiences or interests attend the following:

- Job Club I, the focus of which is to become aware of the different kinds of jobs that exist in the community and the associated wages and benefits

- Job Club II, the focus of which is to explore the various environments in which certain jobs occur and to acquire an understanding of appropriate social and living skills necessary to obtain employment

Job Club members are required to attend regularly scheduled meetings (usually once or twice a week) in a consistent and punctual manner. The meetings include presentations, role playing activities, and tours of various working environments in the community. Presentations led by successful supported employees can be most effective. In keeping with the consumer-driven approach to supported employment, the purpose of Job Club I and II is to enhance the consumer's ability to make an informed choice about her/his employment. And, throughout the Job Club I & II process, the supported employment advocate can gather critical information that will facilitate appropriate job placements.

Individuals who are actually working in a supported employment position also attend Job Club meetings. Job Club III is designed to provide information and services that assist the supported employee to maintain his/her job. Job Club III meetings explore:

(1) work-appropriate social, interpersonal, coping, and problem-solving skills

(2) common and specific company policies and procedures, e.g., sick leave, vacation leave, time-keeping, chain of command

(3) other skills that are required to sustain employment, e.g., attendance, punctuality, quantity and quality of work parameters, appropriate appearance, appropriate interaction with supervisors and coworkers, stress management

(4) issues of career development

Job Club III provides a timely, consistent forum for supported employees to discuss their successes and problems as they relate to the world of work. In addition, the provision of services through Job Club III meets the needs for ongoing services of persons with long-term mental illness.

Some individuals with severe disabilities may need or desire more exposure to the world of work before making an employment decision. A Volunteer Program can provide a way for individuals to actually experience different employment options before committing to a particular position. These volunteer placements allow individuals to "see what it's really like to work as a ______," and provide valuable assessment information to the employment advocate.

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) is typically made up of business leaders from the local community. The main purpose of the BAC is to develop supported employment jobs. Each member of the BAC is expected to make contacts with other employers in the area to foster the development of supported employment placements. Consumers who are seeking supported employment positions can come to a BAC meeting to express their employment desires and provide relevant biographical information. BAC members can then focus their development efforts on jobs for specific consumers. BAC members can also assist with marketing efforts, provide access to business and civic associations, and help evaluate local labor market trends (Venne, 1990). The ILC invests some time and energy with a BAC but the benefits can be significant.

The kinds of supported employment-related experiences that the ILC provides via Job Clubs, a Volunteer Program, and a Business Advisory Committee depend on the needs and desires of the consumers, and the creativity and commitment of the ILC. The following is an example of just such a creative effort at the Center for the Rehabilitation and Training of Persons with Disabilities (the Center) in Chicago. In order to expand its involvement in the community and ability to obtain job placements, the Center created a program entitled Job Opportunity Interview Network (JOIN). Members are recruited into JOIN by staff for the purpose of conducting simulated employment interviews at their place of business with program consumers. As of 1989, JOIN was constituted of 15 representatives of corporations in the city area. Members are told they will have one interview per month. Staff are involved in scheduling interviews with the JOIN member and provide a one-page feedback form that is filled out by the JOIN member. This program is useful in several different ways. It affords a real-life interview situation that helps consumers model appropriate behaviors at the time of interview. It allows employers who have not hired a person with a disability to come into a closer relationship with consumers of the Center's services. Lastly, from time to time, program staff have noticed that some JOIN members offer a job to the consumer based upon the mock interview. An ILC could adopt a similar program as part of the Job Club experience through a joint effort of the supported employment advocate and the Business Advisory Committee. It is imperative that ILCs monitor its services and related activities to ensure that it is meeting the needs and desires of supported employment consumers.

INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN (ILP) DEVELOPMENT

STRAND ACTIVITY AREAS

STRATEGIES

- Peer Counseling/ Counseling
- Information and Referral
- Direct Activity
- Advocacy
- Networking

← INTERFACE ACROSS STRANDS, AS APPROPRIATE →

Housing Services	Transportation/ Mobility Services	Living Skills Services	Counseling Services	Community Integration Services	Employment/ Supported Employment
1. Home safety skills development	1. Personal vehicle assessment	1. Personal hygiene skills development	1. Group personal/social adjustment counseling	1. Access to available community services/ events	1. Assistance in locating/ maintaining employment
2. In-home mobility skills development	2. Personal vehicle modification	2. Problem solving skills development	2. Ongoing individual counseling regarding specific behaviors & progress toward achieving them	2. Basic academic skills devleopment (reading, writing, arithmetic)	2. Employment-related training (occupational/ attitudinal)
3. Cleaning skills development	3. Use of inter-community transportation systems	3. Communication skills development			3. Job Club
					4. Volunteer Program
					5. BAC

PREREQUISITES FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

PREREQUISITES FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT

Summary

The Independent Living Plan (ILP) is implemented in an efficient and effective manner to ensure that the needs of consumers are best met.

Major Points

- "Building Block One" activities addressing general skills and knowledge in designated areas are implemented by the responsible ILC staff person(s).
- "Building Block One" provides activity list and measurement/outcomes demonstrated by consumer to "Building Block Two" ILC staff person(s).
- ILP staffing is conducted at three-month intervals to determine need for modifications in activities or timelines.
- Supported employment activities are conducted and coordinated to address:
    - limited experiences in vocational settings
    - limited or no job-seeking skills
    - limited experience in social/behavioral aspects of the workplace
- As the consumer participates in independent living and supported employment-related activities, specific areas of growth are identified in order to accomplish specific prerequisites for supported employment placement.

Discussion

Within the realm of independent living, the ILC supported employment consumer participates in activities that meet "Building Block One" goals and objectives. "Building Block One" activities begin to prepare the consumer to enter the world of work with attention to such matters as housing, finances, transportation, attendant services. As the individual accomplishes the Building Block I goals and objectives, he/she begins activities in Building Block II if appropriate. Periodic staffings are conducted at three-month intervals in order to modify activities or timelines as needed.

The consumer also participates in activities (e.g., Job Club, Volunteer Program) to expand her/his work experiences or knowledge, job-seeking skills, and repertoire of social/behavioral skills that are necessary in the workplace.

From her/his experiences in these various activities, the consumer not only obtains knowledge and skills that can be put into a resume, but can clarify her/his decision about the type of employment he/she desires and the context in which to perform it. The supported employment advocate can continue to gain important information about the consumer's skill levels, the kinds of supports she/he requires to work, and the intensity of those required supports.

As the consumer participates in the various activities across all areas, the supported employment advocate, the ILC staff, and the consumer identify areas in which further growth is needed in order to be placed in a supported employment position. These general and specific prerequisites vary from individual to individual, but must be accomplished before placement.

Summary

A variety of supported employment jobs are developed to maximize the ability of staff to match consumers' expressed desires, skills, and experiences.

Major Points

- Supported Employment Criteria are established for profiling the employee according to employer/work dimensions involving:
    - physical space
    - type of work
    - ability to accommodate
    - personnel status
    - pay and benefits
    - accessibility to public transportation
    - work routine/shift
    - supervision
    - number/percentage of persons with disabilities in the work force
    - extent of opportunities for career advancement
    - others as appropriate
- Employer contacts are made and employer profiles are developed, along with job profiles as appropriate for developed/potential jobs.
- A computer database is structured for use in organizing and describing job possibilities with actual developed supported employment positions.

- Consumer profiles are compared with employer/job profiles to determine adequacy of potential supported employment placement sites.

Discussion

The process of job development begins with the marketing of supported employment to potential employers. Frequently, non-profit organizations have limited experience in the business world and may be unsure as to how to contact employers, what to say to them, and how to best encourage them to hire a supported employee.

As a first step, supported employment staff can screen the local area for information about possible employment options. This initial screening is conducted in order to generate a list of employers that can be contacted later about the possibilities of supported employment placements in their businesses. Ideally, this screening should be updated every six to twelve months. In order to conduct a community job market screening, supported employment staff might:

- Contact the local chamber of commerce for a listing of major employers in the community.
- Contact the state employment commission and/or private employment agencies for current trends in employment.
- Screen newspaper classified ads for names of potential employers and job openings.
- Contact vocational rehabilitation counselors, sheltered workshops, and others knowledgeable about supported employment services in your area for names of companies who have already hired supported employees.
- Initiate special programs to bring employers and consumers together, helping to illuminate "business."

- Contact local employers to identify the various types of jobs that exist within their business. Ask about problems with high employee turnover and low morale.

(Adapted from Moon, Goodall, Barcus & Brooke, 1986)

These data can be used to target businesses for current and future job development.

In general, supported employment staff will want to meet with the appropriate representative of each targeted business. This appointment can be arranged via letter, telephone call, or drop-in visit. Any written marketing materials (brochures, business cards, etc.) can be provided to the potential employer before the scheduled appointment. Supported employment staff should prepare for the meeting by becoming as familiar as possible with the employer's business and tailoring the presentation to fit that business and the allotted time for the meeting. A presentation to a prospective employer could include the following:

- A brief discussion of the work characteristics of individuals with disabilities with particular emphasis on attendance and punctuality

  In general, workers with disabilities are equal to or better than their non-disabled co-workers in the areas of safety, attendance, punctuality, job stability, and job satisfaction. Their job performance, once a task is mastered, is equal to or better than the performance of non-disabled workers in similar positions. (*Bonus facts*, Vol.3, No.1)

- A brief discussion of general labor shortages and the potential for individuals with disabilities to help fill these gaps

  Many employers and economists perceive a current and future labor shortage in entry and mid-level positions. By tapping the pool of workers with disabilities, employers can address the problems associated with this labor shortage. [For more detailed information on this topic, see Chapter 2 **Business/Economic Climate**.]

- A brief summary of the specific services your organization offers with emphasis on the follow-along services

  As part of the general marketing effort, supported employment programs should determine the range of services that it will offer to employers. These might include:

  - a pool of pre-screened job candidates
  - on-the-job training and support
  - on-going job site training and support
  - supervision, placement, and support
  - job redesign
  - job sharing
  - job efficiency studies
  - production studies
  - legal information related to: EEO, ADA
  - co-worker and supervisor training and support
  - on-going human resource development consultation
  - tax incentive information and forms

  (Griffin & Revell, 1991, p. 68)

  Supported employment programs need to clarify the services that they offer in order to deliver what is promised to employers.

- A description of available tax incentives and wage subsidies

  Two economic incentives are available to private businesses that hire workers with disabilities. The Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) is subtracted from the amount of federal income tax a business owes. In general, the credit amount is equal to 25% of the first $6,000 in wages paid to an eligible individual. IRS Publication 906 details the regulations and procedures governing TJTC. State vocational rehabilitation agencies offer on-the-job training wage subsidy programs in which employers are reimbursed for additional training costs of the worker with disabilities. Eligible businesses can be reimbursed for 100% of the first month's wages and 50% of the second month's wages. In most cases, these stipends are arranged via a contract or formalized agreement with the state vocational rehabilitation agency. Supported employment programs can offer to apply for these incentives for the employer as one of the services it provides.

During the appointment, staff should assess the needs of the employer, obtain information about the types of jobs that exist within the business, and leave the appointment with a commitment to provide a service or take a specific next step with the employer. Staff should be prepared for objections and questions of employers. (Griffin & Revell, 1991)

To assist the supported employment advocate with job development and marketing, supported employment programs frequently form Business Advisory Committees (BAC). The BAC consists of local business leaders and participates in the following supported employment functions:

- To develop jobs for people with disabilities
- To track local labor market trends
- To design and fund marketing materials
- To open access to business and civic associations

(Venne, 1990, p. 7)

Supported employment staff should work closely with members of the BAC to expedite job development and marketing efforts. As part of the formation and ongoing recruitment of BAC members, the supported employment organization will need to clarify the intended outcomes of the BAC, and expectations of individual members of the committee.

(For example, BAC members might be required to make at least one contact per month on behalf of the organization. This expectation would need to be communicated as part of the BAC member recruitment process.)

In order to appropriately place individuals in supported employment positions, organizations should establish criteria to evaluate potential employers and jobs. The development and use of an ***Employer Profile*** and a ***Job Profile*** can provide the means for gathering, recording, and analyzing the variables considered critical in supported employment placements. In general, the supported employment advocate is responsible for completing these profiles. This information can be collected through telephone contacts; interviews with employers, co-workers, and supervisors; and observation at the work place.

The purpose of the ***Employer Profile*** is to provide a range of information about a business in general: the types of possible jobs, range of wages and benefits, interest in hiring a supported employee, opportunities for advancement, accessibility, ability to make accommodations, opportunities for interaction with non-disabled co-workers, etc. The purpose of a ***Job Profile*** is to detail the major duties, required skills, and general work characteristics of a particular position. It contains such information as wage, number of hours, schedule, transportation availability, physical and appearance requirements, level of supervision provided, acceptance of unusual behaviors, availability of reinforcement, pace of work required, and others as appropriate. [See the end of this section for examples of a ***Job*** and an ***Employer Profile***.]

Information from the ***Employer Profile*** and the ***Job Profile*** can be organized within a computerized data base (or traditional paper file). Consumer profiles are then compared to the employment profiles in the data base to determine the adequacy of possible supported employment placement sites. This comparison is useful to determine any prerequisites that consumers need for specific supported placements.

Finally, it is critical to remember that consumer employment preferences should drive job development; supported employment staff should cultivate a range of employer and job possibilities in order to best respond to the varied needs and desires of consumers.

Guide for Job Development Presentations

Step I

Getting the Appointment

Compose letters of introduction

Develop written media (brochures, business cards)

Develop audio visual media (video, slide programs)

Make contacts through community & social activities

Make drop-in visits or cold calls

Compose and practice a telephone script

Step II

Preparing for Employer Meeting

Begin with an informal nonbusiness topic

Limit your presentation to the agreed upon time

Dress in the manner expected of other marketing and sales representatives calling on the company

Be consistent in describing your services in a way that reinforces valued people and valued services

Identify and relate yourself with the business world

Be enthusiastic and confident and make it a marketing presentation, not a sell job anticipate objections and appropriate responses

Step III

Making the Presentation

Provide a brief summary of the service

Assess the needs of the employer through careful listening and observation (see job analysis form)

Develop a mutually agreed upon understanding of employer need

Emphasize marketing the service, (i.e., fashioning the service that responds to employer needs)

Close any presentations with a commitment to provide a service or take a defined next step identifying employer/customer need

(Griffin & Revell, 1991, p.71)

EMPLOYER CRITERIA FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Rate employment opportunity on the scale in the right hand column. 1 is the lowest, 3 being average, and 5 being the highest allowable score available.

1. WAGES 1 2 3 4 5

Wages commensurate with production.

What is normal rate of pay for this position? ________

What is current production rate for this position? ________

Salary ________

Procedure for raises:
Automatic ________
Earned ________
Yearly ________
Steps/grades ____

2. BENEFITS 1 2 3 4 5

- Comprehensive,
- life/health insurance,
- sick leave,
- dental,
- vacation leave,
- workman's compensation,
- holiday leave,

Which benefits will employee be entitled to receive? Circle the benefits available above.

What is the waiting period or probation period before benefits begin?

____ 3 mos. ____ 6 mos. ____ 9 mos. ____ 12 mos.

List specific benefits and restrictions:________________________________

____

____

3. ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES 1 2 3 4 5

Vertical and lateral movement to advance career and earnings.

Will this position teach/provide skills needed to advance within company? ____

What skills needed to advance? ____________________

Will skills transfer to other companies? ________________

What track record does company have in advancement? __________

4. ACCOMMODATIONS 1 2 3 4 5

Employer will allow reasonable modifications to work sites (e.g., buildings, work stations, equipment, parking, breakrooms, restrooms, emergency apparatus).

Is employer willing to pay for modifications or will employer need assistance financially? _____

To what extent is employer willing to contribute and which modifications is he willing to accept? ________________

5. JOB DUTIES MODIFICATION-ADAPTABILITY 1 2 3 4 5

A. Is employer willing to modify job duties to adapt to consumer's limitations (e.g., reassignment of any one particular job duty to co-work)?

B. Job Sharing - where job assignment is shared by two individuals.

C. Will employer allow for one full-time eight hour position to be shared by two individuals?

6. STABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT 1 2 3 4 5

Is Employer stable and long term as opposed to exploratory venture?

How long has company been in business? _______

Does company have a good reputation in the community? _____

Verify company's reputation with the Better Business Bureau. _____

7. PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT 1 2 3 4 5

Employment offers reasonable permanence as opposed to temporary, contracted, or seasonal positions.

Will this be a permanent position? _____

Will this be a new position ? _____

8. TRAINING TIME ALLOWED 1 2 3 4 5

Employer allows sufficient training time for trainee to master job duties.

How long is company/job training time to reach expected standards? _____

Will the company allow a longer training time with Employment Advocate available to do the training? _____ How long? _____

How is training usually done? ______________________________

By: supervisor _____ group _____ individual _____

9. TAX INCENTIVES - TCJC, OJT 1 2 3 4 5

Targeted Job Tax Credit (TCJC) - Available to employers as incentive to hire.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) - Pays percentage of new employee's wages for to 90 days to compensate for extra training if needed.

Is the employer aware of tax incentives and how they may benefit their company? _____

Is the employer interested in tax incentives and how to file for tax credits? _____

Does employer need assistance with paperwork? _____

Information is available through your local area employment commission.

10. INTEGRATION 1 2 3 4 5

Does the company provide a natural opportunity for integration? ___

Does the company sponsor activities for social integration? (e.g., baseball team, bowling league, company parties, etc.) _____

JOB PROFILE

Consumer Name: ____

Job Title: ____________________________________ DOT #: ________

Company Name: ____

Contact Person: ________________________ Phone #: ______________
Second #: ______________

Work Schedule: Shift Hours ____________________________________

Size of Company: # of Employees _______ # of Disabled Employees ______

Years in Business: ___________ Volume or Pace of Work: ______________

Training Time: ______________ Probation Time: ____________________

Rate of Job Turnover: ____

# of Employees in Same Position: ___________ During same hours: ________

Written Job Description Available: __________________________________

Salary/Wages: __________ per hour __________ monthly
__________ overtime __________ flex/comp time

Availability of Supervisor (estimate percentage of time): ________________

Availability of Co-workers: ____________ direct ____________ indirect

Policy & Procedures Manual: ______________ Received? ____________

(if not available explain evaluation procedure) __________________________

____

What are Important Aspects of the Position? ______________________________

_______________	speed vs. thoroughness	_______________
_______________	judgement vs. routine	_______________
_______________	repetition vs. variability	_______________
_______________	teamwork vs. independence	_______________

other ____
____

Vertical/Lateral Movement to Advance Career/Earnings ____________________

Describe Math or Reading Skills Required: ____________________
____

What Machinery or Equipment will the Employee Need to Operate? ____________
____

Union: ______ yes ______ no

COMMUNICATION NEED:

__________ nonverbal __________ verbal __________ excessive verbage
__________ hearing __________ hearing impaired
__________ vision __________ limited sight _______ seeing eye dog

SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES COMPANY WIDE:

_____ bowling _____ baseball ______ Co. parties _____ other

TIME OF BREAKS, LUNCH:

scheduled time alotted: __________ 15 min. __________ 30 min. ________ 1 hr.

how many breaks during day: ____________________________

flexible ____ break ____ lunch ____ dinner
scheduled ____ break ____ lunch ____ dinner

Opportunities for integration? ____________________________

ACCOMODATIONS: have accomodations for disabled ever been done before this position? _______ with workforce? ________

Modify: Job Duties ____________________________

Parking ______ Equipment __________ Schedule _________

Buildings (restrooms, breakrooms ramps, doors, etc.) ______________

Purchase additional equipment (TDD, amplified phone, etc.) ________

Interested in Tax incentives: _______ TJTC ________ OJT/JTPA

Modification monies ___________

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

( ) Standing ______ hrs. ( ) Sitting ______ hrs.
( ) Walking ______ hrs.
( ) Lifting ______ lbs. max. _____ min. _____ frequency _______
( ) Carrying ______ lbs.
( ) Pushing/Pulling ______ lbs distance _____
( ) Reaching ______ distance
( ) Climbing ______ height
( ) Balancing ______ ( ) Bending ______
( ) Kneeling ______ ( ) Twisting ______

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:

( ) Fumes ( ) Gases ( ) Temperatures
Inside ____ %
Outside ___ %
( ) Dust ( ) Odors

Proximity to worker? ____

OBSERVATION INFORMATION:

Physical Appearance of Employees (uniform, casual, business dress, etc.)

____

____

ATMOSPHERE:

________	Friendly, Cheerful	__________	Aloof, Indifferent
________	Busy, Relaxed	__________	Busy, Tense
________	Slow, Relaxed	__________	Slow, Tense
________	Structured, Orderly	__________	Unstructured, disorderly

TRANSPORTATION:

Does company have car/van pools? ____________________

How scheduled? __________________________________

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE:

Train	( )	Distance to:	( )
Bus	( )	Distance to:	( )
Car Required	( )		

Comments: ____
____
____

ACCESSIBILITY:

Parking yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Bevelled Sidewalks/Ramps yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Entrances (32 inch min.) yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Doorways (32 inch min.) yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Elevators yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Stairs yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Aisle Widths (32 inch min.) yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Telephone Booths yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Bathrooms yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Equipment yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

Work Area yes ( ) No ( ) Comments ________________

OTHER:

Tour Given ________ By Whom ____

____

Signature/Title

Response Letter Mailed __________ Materials Given ______________________

____

Please overlay your letterhead in this space. The letterhead should designate the supported employment provider, not a state agency which represents more than one provider. Take care not to cover the page number designation or the title of the form. Also, do not change the layout of the form in any way.

JOB SCREENING FORM (Revised 6/90)

Please complete one Job Screening Form for each job the consumer had during the period in question. All items refer to this particular position at this particular company for this particular location.

- -

Consumer	**Staff Member Completing Form**
Name: ______________________	Name: ______________________
SSN: ______________ ______	ID Code: ______________________

- -

Company

Name: ______________________ Screening Date: __ __ / __ __ / __ __ (mo day yr)
ID Code: ______________________

- -

Type of Service/Employment for this Report (Select one): _______

1 = Work activity or Sheltered employment
2 = Entrepreneurial
3 = Mobile work crew
4 = Enclave
5 = Supported job
6 = Supported competitive employment
7 = Time-limited (No ongoing services anticipated)
8 = Other (Specify: ______________________)

Type of Screening: Initial _____ Ongoing _____ Final _____

Job Title: ______________________

Current hourly wage (or wage at last date of employment in this position): ____________
Did a wage change occur since the last Job Screening or Job Update? Yes____ No____

If yes, complete this section:
Hourly rate changed from $_______ to $_______ on ___/___/___
Hourly rate changed from $_______ to $_______ on ___/___/___
Number of Hours per Week: ____________ Months per Year: ____________
If less than 12 months per year, what months is the job not available? ____________
____

Number of employees in this company at this location: ____________
Number of employees without disabilities in immediate area (50 ft. radius): ____________
Number of other employees with disabilities: ____________
In immediate area (50 ft. radius): ____________
Number of other employees in this position: ____________
During the same hours: ____________

General Directions: PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY ITEM UNANSWERED! Indicate the most appropriate response for each item based on observations of the job and interviews with employers, supervisors, and coworkers. Also circle CI (critically important), I (important), LI (less important), or NI (not important) for each item, to indicate its level of importance in this position.

1. Schedule: (Circle Yes or No for each item)	Weekend Work Required	Evening Work Required	Part-Time Job	Full-Time Job
	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

2. Travel Location: (Circle Yes or No for each item)	On Public Transportation Route	On Handicapped Transportation Route
	Yes / No	Yes / No

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

3. Strength; Lifting and Carrying:	Very Light Work (<10 lbs)___	Light Work (10-20 lbs)___	Average Work (30-40 lbs)___	Heavy Work (>50 lbs)___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

4. Endurance: (No Breaks)	Work Required for <2 hours___	Work Required for 2-3 hours___	Work Required for 3-4 hours___	Work Required for >4 hours___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

5. Orienting:	Small Area Only___	One Room___	Several Rooms___	Building Wide___	Building and Grounds___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

6. Physical Mobility:	Sit/Stand In One Area___	Fair Ambulation Required___	Stairs/Minor Obstacles___	Full Physical Requirements___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

7. Work Pace:	Slow Pace___	Average Steady Pace___	Sometimes Fast Pace___	Continual Fast Pace___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

8. Appearance Requirements:

Grooming of Little Importance___
Cleanliness Only Required___
Neat and Clean Required___
Grooming Very Important___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

9. Communication Required:

None/ Minimal___
Key Words/Signs Needed___
Unclear Speech Accepted___
Clear Speech in Sentences/Signs Needed___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

10. Social Interactions:

Social Interactions Not Required___
Appropriate Responses Required___
Social Interactions Required Infrequently___
Social Interactions Required Frequently___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

11. Behavior Acceptance Range:

Many Unusual Behaviors Accepted___
Few Unusual Behaviors Accepted___
No Unusual Behaviors Accepted___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

12. Attention to Task/ Perseverance:

Frequent Prompts Available___
Intermittent Prompts/High Supervision Available___
Intermittent Prompts/Low Supervision Available___
Infrequent Prompts/Low Supervision Available___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

13. Sequencing of Job Duties:

Only One Task Required at a Time___
2-3 Tasks Required in Sequence___
4-6 Tasks Required in Sequence___
7 or more Tasks Required in Sequence___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

14. Initiation of Work/ Motivation:

Initiation of Work Required___
Volunteering Helpful___
Staff will Prompt to Next Task___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

Indicate the most appropriate response for each item based on observations of the job and interviews with employers, supervisors, and coworkers. Also circle CI (critically important), I (important), LI (less important), or NI (not important) for each item, to indicate its level of importance in this position.

15. Daily Changes In Routine:	7 or More Changes___	4-6 Task Changes___	2-3 Task Changes___	No Task Changes___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

16. Reinforcement Available:	Frequent Reinforcement Available___	Reinforcement Intermittent (daily)___	Reinforcement Infrequent (weekly)___	Minimal Reinforcement (pay check)___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

17. Employer Attitude:	Very Supportive of Workers with Disabilities___	Supportive with Reservations__	Indifferent to Workers With Disabilities___	Negative toward Workers with Disabilities___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

18. Employer's Financial Requirements:	Financial Incentives Not Necessary___	Tax Credit or Incentive (e.g., TJTC, OJT)___	Subminimum Wage___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

19. Object Discrimination:	Does Not Need to Distinguish Between Work Supplies___	Must Distinguish Between Work Supplies with an External Cue___	Must Distinguish Between Work Supplies___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

20. Time:	Time Factors Not Important___	Must Identify Breaks/Meals/ Etc.___	Must Tell Time to the Hour___	Must Tell Time to the Minute___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

21. Functional Reading:	None___	Sight Words/ Symbols___	Simple Reading___	Fluent Reading___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

22. Functional Math:	None___	Simple Counting___	Simple Addition/ Subtraction___	Complex Computational Skills___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

23. Street Crossing:	None___	Must Cross 2 Lane Street with Light___	Must Cross 2 Lane Street W/O Light___	Must Cross 4 Lane Street with Light___	Must Cross 4 Lane Street W/O Light___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

24. Visibility To Public:	Consumer Not Visible____	Occasionally Visible___	Regularly Visible___	Visible Throughout the Day/Ongoing___

CI / I / LI / NI
Specifics/Comments:

25. Benefits of Job:
Yes / No 0 = None
Yes / No 1 = Sick Leave
Yes / No 2 = Medical/Health Benefits
Yes / No 3 = Paid Vacation/Annual Leave
Yes / No 4 = Dental Benefits
Yes / No 5 = Employee Discounts
Yes / No 6 = Free or Reduced Meals
Yes / No 7 = Other(Specify):________________________

26. Level of Social Contact: (circle one)

(0) - Employment in a segregated setting in which the majority of interactions with persons without disabilities are with caregivers or service providers.
Example: Adult Activity Center.

(1) - Employment in an integrated environment on a shift or position which is isolated. Contact with coworkers without disabilities or supervisors is minimal.
Example: Night Janitor.

(2) - Employment in an integrated environment on a shift or position which is relatively isolated. Contact with coworkers without disabilities or supervisors is available at lunch or break. Example: Pot Scrubber.

(3) - Employment in an integrated environment in a position requiring a moderate level of task dependency and coworker interaction.
Example: Dishwasher required to keep plate supply stacked for cooks.

(4) - Employment in an integrated environment in a position requiring a high degree of task dependency and coworker interaction and/or high level of contact with customers. Example: Busperson/Porter.

27. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO POSITION:

Bus Tables ___
Food Prep. ___
Buffing ___
Dusting ___
Stocking ___

Sweeping ___
Assembly ___
Vacuuming ___
Restroom Cleaning ___
Washing Equipment ___

Dish Machine Use ___
Mopping(Indust.) ___
Food Line Supply ___
Trash Disposal ___
Food Serving ___

"Keeping Busy" ___
Clerical ___
Pot Scrubbing ___
Other ___
____

COMMENTS:

Rate of employee turnover (annual percentage):

Overall: _____ This position: _____

Number of supervisors: _____ Rate of supervisor turnover: _____

Written job description available? __________

What are absolute "don'ts" for an employee in this position? (Manager's pet peeves, reasons for dismissal,etc.)______________________________

____

____

Environmental characteristics (physical barriers, temperature extremes, etc.):

____

____

____

____

Additional Comments: ______________________________

____

____

____

____

FORM DEVELOPED BY THE REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Taken from: Rehabilitation Counselor DESK TOP GUIDE to Supported Employment
Susan Lehmann Griffin and W. Grant Revell

Summary

Statements of general and specific prerequisites can help to ensure that employees possess the "basics" to obtain/maintain a supported employment placement.

Major Points

- General prerequisites necessary for the consumer to advance to placement stage are identified. These prerequisites include:
    - ability to use public transportation
    - stable housing situation for the first six months of placement
    - willingness to participate in counseling
    - desire to be involved in supported employment
    - some form of leisure activity
- Consumer profile information is used to identify promising employer/job placements creating a Consumer-Job Match Profile.
- Specific supported employment prerequisites are applied to consumer profiles to determine areas in need of skill development, prior to supported employment placement.
- ILP is modified to include need area(s) indicating a time frame for development and staff responsible. Certain placement activities may/may not be occurring during this process.

- The Consumer-Job Match Profile is updated as appropriate to indicate plan for placement.

Discussion

The identification of general prerequisites for supported employment placement is an attempt to provide the consumer with the supports and skills that are usually necessary to obtain and maintain employment. These prerequisites focus on areas such as housing, transportation, living skills, counseling, and leisure skills. It is assumed that an individual participating in community-based employment will require stable housing and the ability to travel to and from work. Some individuals may require referral to the local housing authority to arrange for housing; others may need referral to a form of supervised housing, including any ILC-based housing. In order to work, the consumer must be able to travel to and from the job on a scheduled basis. Arrangements for transportation should maximize the independence of the supported employee rather than foster long-term dependence on family or friends. Certainly, where fixed route or paratransit transportation is available, individuals should learn to access that transportation system. If public transportation is not available, the consumer and ILC/supported employment staff need to begin planning other options. [See **Transportation** in Chapter 2 for more information on transportation.]

Consumers will need to be willing to participate in counseling in order to have a medium for discussing and solving problems, clarifying needs and desires, and obtaining needed information and guidance on a variety of independent and supported employment issues. And perhaps most importantly, the consumer should actively desire supported employment; ideally, the family or primary support group of the consumer supports the individual in her/his desire to obtain employment. This discussion of prerequisites is not meant to be inclusive; consumers may require additional prerequisites depending on their individual status, e.g., the completion of attendant, legal, or financial arrangements.

As the consumer acquires the general prerequisites, his/her consumer profile is compared to the database of potential employer/job placements. From this comparison the employment advocate creates a Consumer-Job Match Profile and generates a list of prerequisite skills for a specific placement. These might include the management or extinction of certain interpersonal or maladaptive behaviors that interfere with job performance. Specific transportation arrangements will need to be finalized. Modifications or accommodations of the work site should be accomplished. The consumer will need to acquire and learn to use any required assistive/adaptive equipment. These specific prerequisites could also include attention to housing, attendant care, finances, independent living skills, etc.

The identified areas of need and growth for both the general and specific prerequisites are reflected on the ILP, and the Consumer-Job Match Profile is updated to indicate the acquisition of each prerequisite.

Summary

Maintenance of a supported employment position is maximized by determining the best match and providing appropriate on-the-job training and support.

Major Points

- Prior to placement a thorough task/job analysis is completed. The employment advocate works the job to ensure understanding of job tasks and responsibilities.
- Placement occurs and on-the-job training plan is implemented.
- Analysis and implementation of fading techniques as appropriate are planned.
- A work performance documentation system is implemented and maintained with input from various appropriate sources.

Discussion

Consumers are counseled about their specific supported employment placements after careful evaluation of the consumer's likes, dislikes, skills and abilities, and the varied characteristics of the job and the work site. Hopefully, throughout the activities preceding placement (e.g., Job Club, Volunteer Program, independent living activities addressing prerequisites for employment, job development), the consumer, the family, and the employment advocate have agreed upon a particular type of employment and a specific placement. Key factors that seem to affect the success of a given placement are: the availability of reliable transportation; the motivation of the consumer; the level of support of the family/guardian; the physical abilities of the consumer; the presence of maladaptive behaviors. These issues should be addressed and resolved before placement occurs.

The consumer may participate in a job interview with the prospective employer. As part of the interview process the employment advocate needs to:

- schedule the interview and notify the consumer, family, and relevant agency personnel of the date and time
- arrange to transport the consumer to the interview
- inform the consumer of dress and behavioral expectations
- become familiar with the consumer's work history, background, and strengths
- take an active role when appropriate during the interview
- discuss salary, hours, and benefits
- restate the advantages of supported employment
- negotiate a work start date
- inform the family and other relevant individuals of the results of the interview

(Moon, Goodall, Barcus, & Brooke, 1986)

Before the consumer's first day of work, the supported employment advocate completes a thorough task/job analysis. The task analysis is performed in order to identify and sequence job duties, and to design appropriate training methods. It describes a step-by-step breakdown of the behaviors required to perform each task. The steps should be stated in specific, observable, measurable, and clear terms. They should be presented in the proper sequence and provide an appropriate level of detail. Task analyses are completed through observation at the work site and performance of the job duties by the supported employment advocate. The employment advocate works in the supported employment position in order to confirm and/or modify the duties, task analyses, and other related behaviors of the job.

It is suggested that the employment advocate perform the following activities as final preparation for the first day of work:

- Arrange for employer financial incentives, e.g., on-the-job training funds, Targeted Job Tax Credit
- Discuss with the consumer and family the effect of work on social security payments
- File with Social Security Administration (workplace, wage, and hour information)
- Apply for finalize PASS (Plan to Achieve Self Support), IRWE (Impairment-Related Work Expense), Student Earned Income Exclusion
- Identify and address any unrealistic expectations that the consumer or family has
- Talk with consumer and family to confirm that this job is what the consumer really wants
- Finalize transportation arrangements
- Discuss and confirm salary, benefits, and work schedule with the consumer and family
- Arrange for uniform, if needed
- Arrange for job modifications, if needed
- Discuss with consumer what reinforcers are possible
- Talk over any special needs or concerns of the consumer, his/her family, or the employer

- Negotiate a contract, if needed

(Griffin & Revell, 1991, p. 111)

The on-the-job (OJT) training phase of supported employment begins the first day of work, and can be thought of as having three components: ***orientation and skills assessment***; ***initial training***; and ***stabilization and fading*** (Griffin & Revell, 1991). Each of these components will be discussed below.

Orientation and Skills Assessment

During the ***orientation and skills assessment*** component of OJT, the employment advocate will stay on the job with the consumer for her/his entire schedule. The length of time it takes to orient and assess the worker at the job-site varies from individual to individual. In general, the more severe the consumer's disability, the fewer work-related experiences he/she has, and the less comfortable the worker may feel, the longer this period will be. At the very least, this period can be expected to last from two to four weeks. The employment advocate will orient the new worker to the new surroundings and introduce her/him to co-workers and supervisors. The employment advocate and consumer develop work routines, establish interactions and interdependence with co-workers, revise task analyses, and look for ways to modify or simplify the job or work environment. During this time, the employment advocate may need to perform sixty to eighty percent of the job while providing intensive skill training in one or two specific tasks (Griffin & Revell, 1991). ILP goals and objectives are modified to reflect the necessary skills for the particular supported employment position. The supported employment advocate will finalize the initial training plan, including techniques and reinforcers to be utilized.

As a final note, the consumer should participate in the usual orientation activities of the business; the employment advocate assists in this process as necessary.

Initial Training

After the job/task analyses are completed and a work routine has been established, the ***initial training*** component of OJT begins. Initial systematic skills training is based on establishing the following procedures:

- Assess, track, and record independent performance and work rate through each task analysis.
- Implement appropriate reinforcement schedule.
- Choose prompting techniques that allow the worker to learn the job correctly from the beginning.
- Increase the rate of work once the quality of work is acceptable by company standards.
- Document the productivity of each individual over time.

(Adapted from Moon, Goodall, Barcus, & Brooke, 1986)

Data are recorded and reviewed in order to determine the progress of the supported employee. Information about the worker's performance is collected on each step of a task analysis. Two types of data are gathered: probe data and level-of-prompt data (Moon *et al.*, 1986). Probe data indicate the level of independent performance of the various steps of any task analysis. Level-of-prompt data are collected between probes to indicate the type and frequency of prompts being delivered, and therefore, progress toward independent performance. It is through data collection and analysis that the employment advocate can evaluate the effectiveness of the training plan and make decisions about current and future training strategies. In addition, funding authorities, such as vocational rehabilitation agencies, may require documentation of training and performance activities. These data can be used to show or estimate how much additional time may be needed before agencies such as vocational rehabilitation close the case.

In choosing and delivering reinforcement, it is important to remember that the best reinforcers are those that occur naturally in the work environment. Salary, vacations, and co-worker/supervisor praise are examples of this type of reinforcement. However, it may be necessary to provide external reinforcers for some individuals. Reinforcers are only as useful as the value they represent to the consumer. It is important to gain information about what may work with a given consumer through interviews with her/him, family, or others who have worked with him/her in the past. The use of co-workers to offer spontaneous praise for specific, correct work performance can be particularly effective, and can continue after the employment advocate fades from the site. If external, artificial reinforcement is delivered to the worker, the reinforcement plan should contain provisions for the fading or self-administration of the reinforcement before the employment advocate fades from the site.

The supported employment advocate must choose appropriate prompting techniques in order to facilitate the learning of skills that lead to correct and independent performance of job duties. One method of providing prompts promotes the use of the "least intrusive prompt," i.e., verbal, modeling, physical guidance. When employing this method, the employment advocate delivers a succession of prompts from the least intrusive (verbal) to the most intrusive (physical guidance) when a prompt is required to produce a correct response. The use of the least intrusive prompt encourages the most efficient learning of the required tasks.

The supported employment advocate and the consumer must perform the job in accordance with company standards. The employment advocate may perform some duties while providing intensive training to the worker on others. Training is provided on a few job duties at a time. As the supported employee performs tasks independently, the trainee's work rate on that task may need to increase before training on additional tasks begins. In addition, the worker can participate in performing all or part of a task with the trainer.

Stabilization and Fading

The ***stabilization and fading*** component of on-the-job training involves the gradual reduction of the level of assistance provided the worker at the job site. The fading process may take weeks or months depending on the individual employee. The supported employment advocate evaluates the following criteria in order to develop a fading plan: on/off task behavior, levels of prompting assistance, quality of work, and quantity of work. In general, fading begins when a worker performs each task at a pre-determined level for a pre-determined number of trials. The fading process should be implemented systematically and slowly. (Based on Moon, Goodall, Barcus, & Brooke, 1986)

As the worker's performance becomes more independent and correct (as reflected by the data), the supported employment advocate fades from the immediate work area for brief periods of time. Then the employment advocate may remain on-site only when job training is required, and finally, reduce the number of days per week on the job site. Most state vocational rehabilitation agencies provide outcome oriented guidelines that indicate when stabilization has taken place. For example, according to current Texas Rehabilitation Commission operating guidelines, stabilization occurs when the employment advocate's time on the job site is reduced to 20% of the supported employee's scheduled hours and the employee is able to perform the job tasks with adequate proficiency. Typically, state vocational rehabilitation agencies close supported employment cases once the consumer is stabilized on the job.

It is important that supervisors and co-workers participate in the initial training and fading process to establish "natural supports" within the employment setting. It is these people who will be there on a daily basis for the supported employee once stabilization has occurred. In order to facilitate the integration of the supported employee into the work force, the employment advocate can:

- involve co-workers and supervisors in training whenever possible

- explain the particular strengths, weaknesses, and background of the supported employee
- model appropriate interactions between the supported employee and co-workers/supervisors
- encourage socialization between co-workers and the supported employee by arranging activities if necessary

Some supported employment researchers (Rhodes *et al.*, 1991) contend that employers are able and are willing to accept more of the responsibilities for on-the-job training and ongoing support associated with supported employment. While this may occur with employers who become knowledgeable about meeting the needs of supported employees, it most probably will not be the case with those employers -- especially small businesses -- that have limited resources and experiences. Involving and expanding the roles of employers, however, should be continually investigated by supported employment service providers. As Rhodes *et al.*, (1991) state:

> The public trust is not inexhaustible, and will support only a finite number of people with disabilities. The future of supported employment for people with severe disabilities would seem to rely heavily on employers' abilities to develop the skills, knowledge, and will to provide support, and the service system's ability to support businesses in doing that.
> p.11

Throughout all components of on-the-job training, the supported employment advocate collects and monitors data in order to provide the services that will stabilize the individual in the job. As the advocate fades from the work site, he/she will rely more and more on input and evaluation from supervisors and co-workers. The employment advocate must be prepared to respond to any problems or concerns as they appear. Training may need to be intensified for a short period of time after fading has occurred. It is critical that the employment advocate establish and maintain communication with the employer. There are certain common warning signs that may indicate a need for more intensive intervention/training. These "Red Flags" include:

- change in work responsibilities
- change in work schedule or routine
- change in supervisor
- change in transportation
- change in housing situation
- change in the family

As some of these factors are not specific to the work site, the employment advocate must also maintain a communication network with the family or other primary support group of the supported employee.

Summary

Frequent and periodic assessment of the ILP will make it a valuable planning and measurement tool.

Major Points

- Each ILP will be informally assessed at the three-month interval.
- The consumer, employment advocate, funding agency representative, and all strand coordinators determine the need for modification of planned activities, projected timeframes, and/or staff responsibilities.
- Modifications to the ILP will form an addendum to the six-month ILP.

Discussion

As the supported employee continues to receive supported employment services both on and off the job site, all individuals involved in providing those services collect data and monitor the performance and needs of the employee. At three-month intervals, the consumer, the supported employment advocate, the funding agency representative, and all IL strand coordinators determine the need for modification of activities, timelines, staff responsibilities, etc. Any suggested modifications are attached to the ILP as an addendum. This short-interval assessment provides for more timely responses by the IL/supported employment staff and the funding agency to any new or revised needs of the supported employee. In certain cases, however, an unexpected need may arise that warrants ILP modification and determination of new strategies on a more frequent basis than the three-month interval.

Summary

Revision of the Independent Living Plan (ILP) on a regular basis will contribute to the consumer's progress toward increased levels of independence.

Major Points

- At the end of the ILP six-month period, a formal staffing is conducted to determine progress of the consumer and need/desire to continue ILP activities for another six-month period.
- The new ILP is developed with input from the consumer.
- The consumer who is receiving ongoing services from supported employment advocates and is not involved in other ILC strands will have the ILP individually maintained and revised to permit continued monitoring of success in employment, and/or change in support systems.

Discussion

Typically, the ILP is revised at six-month intervals. A formal staffing to determine if the consumer wishes to continue in ILP activities, including supported employment, should be conducted. As throughout the rest of the IL/supported employment process, the consumer's desires drive this revision. The employment advocate, strand coordinators, funding agency representative, consumer, and her/his family meet to assess the consumer's progress and desires. New ILP objectives and activities should be developed that address the needs and wants of the consumer at the time of the staffing. Individuals who choose to participate in only the supported employment strand of the ILC will maintain an ILP that reflects supported employment objectives and activities in order to monitor success. Some supported employees may choose to change support systems once their involvement with other independent living strands is concluded.

Summary

Provision of the required ongoing services is critical to the maintenance of a supported employment position.

Major Points

- Once an individual is "stabilized" on the job, an individualized set of support services that assist in maintaining the supported employee in the employment position must be arranged and provided for as long as he/she occupies the position.
- The ongoing services must include on-the-job training and observation at least twice monthly, except for individuals with long-term mental illness. Supported employees with long-term mental illness may receive the required services off the job site. Otherwise, there exists a variety of service areas (e.g., housing, advocacy, attendant care) that may need to be addressed by a consumer to maintain employment.
- The ILC staff (including the supported employment advocate) continue to provide services on an ongoing basis to ensure maintenance of the employment position and to prepare the consumer for more responsibilities and higher wages, i.e., career-building activities.

Discussion

The nature of ongoing support services will vary according to the way in which on-the-job training occurred. Generally, the more quickly the individual is moved out of the intensive on-the-job training component, the more demanding the ongoing support must be and the more difficult it will be for an employment advocate providing the ongoing support to meet all of the needs of the consumer and the work environment. In the Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986, Title VI-C, Section 635 (b) states that:

> Services under this part are limited to training and traditionally time-limited post-employment services leading to supported employment. Extended supported employment services shall be provided by the relevant State agencies and private organizations as specified under section 634 (b) (4) of this part of any other available source.

Section 634 (b) (4) requires state plans that are submitted to the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration to:

> demonstrate evidence of collaboration by and funding from relevant State agencies and private nonprofit organizations to assist in the provision of supported employment services.

In essence, the legislation requires the provision of ongoing services after the termination of VR-funded initial services. Clarifications of the legislation by the RSA require that these services be individualized and provide the supported employee with the necessary assistance to maintain her/his job. In addition, training, retraining, and observation at the job site must occur at least twice monthly, except for persons with long-term mental illness who may receive the required ongoing services at a location off the job site.

Traditional supported employment programs tend to view the nature of ongoing support as the training/retraining that is needed to maintain the individual in the specific employment position. The consumer-driven approach, however, describes the role of ongoing support as not only training/retraining as appropriate, but also development of new skills and abilities that promote the individual's capability to assume higher levels of job responsibility, with associated increases in pay. It is reasonable to assume that a supported employee will need some assistance in "moving ahead." In other words, ongoing support services should not only address the maintenance of the employee's present position but her/his career aspirations as well.

In order to encourage job retention, supported employment advocates must be proactive in their follow-along methods. The following suggestions reflect such an approach on the part of employment advocates:

- if you are not the employment advocate who enabled the individual's placement and stabilization, review records to become oriented to the previous training experience and essential issues that need to be addressed in the provision of ongoing services

- conduct monitoring visits at the job site at least two times monthly. . . look for incipient problems that can be addressed before they become full-blown problems

- determine a schedule for making phone calls to a designated co-worker advocate

- carefully gather information about and monitor employer/supervisor satisfaction levels

- carefully monitor family satisfaction levels

- schedule off-site visits with the supported employee to monitor her/his satisfaction levels with work progress, future employment goals, living conditions, transportation arrangements, and leisure/recreational opportunities

- establish rapport with the supported employee so that he or she feels welcome to call you regarding problems before they become major issues, but don't depend solely on getting that phone call on a timely basis

- keep accurate records to ensure that staff turnover, illness, and vacations do not interfere with the delivery of ongoing support services

- access other resources/personnel to assist in the provision of ongoing services as appropriate and possible

(Adapted from Griffin & Revell, 1991, p. 161)

During the initial phases of supported employment, the employment advocate should attempt to cultivate "natural supports" within the employment setting so that the employee can continue to successfully perform her/his job as the amount of on-the-job assistance decreases. "Natural supports" can reduce the supported employee's dependence on "outside" resources and provide the means for timely responses to problems that may occur. For example, the supported employee can learn to use cues that occur naturally in the environment (such as bells or buzzers that signal employees certain times of the day, clocks, or other individualized time-keeping devices) to self-administer reinforcement or pace his/her work routine. The employee's supervisor should be as involved as possible in all facets of on-the-job training so that he/she is familiar with and can utilize effective training techniques as appropriate. The employment advocate should assist in establishing relationships between the supported employee and supervisors/co-workers. These individuals can provide spontaneous "natural" reinforcement, formally and informally monitor the supported employee's job performance and satisfaction, and provide ongoing assistance as appropriate. Finally, the employment advocate can establish a system of regular communication with the supported employee to provide the means for direct feedback and input from the consumer.

Throughout the supported employee's tenure at a given job, he/she may require assistance with housing, transportation, advocacy, attendant care, independent living skills, recreation, integration with the non-disabled population, etc. Assistance in these areas can fall under the realm of ongoing services. Therefore, the employment advocate must expand the communication network to include the family/guardian and other professionals (e.g., group home staff, medical personnel) that may be involved with the consumer in order to monitor his/her needs in these areas. Frequently, the following "Red Flags" may indicate a need for more intensive intervention or training. These include changes in: work responsibilities, work schedule or routine, supervisor, transportation arrangements, family, or housing/living situation. It is critical that a feedback system is in place that can alert the employment advocate to these and other kinds of changes that may affect the consumer's ability to maintain employment. The employment advocate may provide the required intervention directly, or arrange for another service provider (within the ILC, or in another organization) to assist the employee. The supported employment advocate, then, must also institute and maintain a network with other service providers in the local community.

Chapter 5

Evaluation of a Supported Employment Program

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Summary

Supported employment programs should assess their supported employment services in terms of quality and ability to assist supported employees in maintaining productive and satisfying employment situations.

Major Points

- Self-evaluation of the supported employment program by the Independent Living Center (ILC) is important in order to monitor and improve the services it offers consumers.
- Documenting and evaluating such factors as the variety of employment positions developed, length of employment of consumers, wages and benefits, and levels of consumer satisfaction are valuable activities in the assessment of a supported employment program.
- In general, an evaluation of a consumer-driven supported employment program could focus on some of the following features:
    - employment status of the supported employee
    - integration opportunities
    - severity of disability
    - ongoing support
    - consumer involvement in the supported employment process

- These features of supported employment can be evaluated using a variety of quality characteristics or parameters that may include:
    - physical proximity to non-disabled workers
    - type of work performed
    - personnel status
    - pay and benefits
    - transportation
    - number of supported employees
    - work routines
    - staff supervision
    - support organization
    - consumer involvement in planning
    - nature of ongoing services
    - integration with non-disabled persons
    - business involvement
- The quality of these features can be self-assessed on a scale of 1 to 5 from less to more desirable.
- The supported employment advocate or some other designated staff member should be responsible for collecting, summarizing, and analyzing the data related to these features on an ongoing basis.

Discussion

In order to ensure that the provision of supported employment and other related services is of a quality that assists consumers in maintaining and improving their employment options, ILCs can actively assess the strengths and weaknesses of its various programs. The supported employment program component should be evaluated at a minimum in terms of the employment status of the consumer, opportunities for integration, severity of disability, nature of ongoing services, and the level of consumer involvement. Attention should also be paid to how satisfied consumers are with their jobs and the services rendered by the ILC, the financial status (wages and benefits) of supported employees, the length of time consumers remain in their jobs, and the range of employment opportunities provided by the program.

The quality parameters listed on the previous page can be assessed on a scale from 1 to 5 (less to more desirable), and indicate the relative strengths and weaknesses of each feature. The self-evaluation forms at the end of this section illustrate ways to judge each parameter. For example, the quality of the parameter "scope of work" is scaled from 1 to 5 where 1 represents "work performed *not* typical of co-workers" and 5 represents "work performed typical of co-workers." ILC administrators can utilize this type of evaluation method to:

- assess their plan for a supported employment program
- assess an ongoing supported employment program in order to identify areas for strengthening
- assess a specific supported employment job to determine areas to improve employment and its associated setting

In other words, self-evaluation can be used in both the planning and implementation phases of a supported employment program as a whole, and in the planning and implementation of specific supported employment placements. Other ILC/supported employment staff and consumers can also evaluate the program and/or specific placements in terms of these criteria.

The important point is that through active, ongoing self-assessment, an ILC can continuously improve its program and outcomes for consumers. By providing supported employment services that are integrated with ILC services, an ILC can assist consumers to obtain and maintain supported employment positions that bring them satisfaction, an improved standard of living, and an enhanced quality of life.

Physical Space

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
Employees physically separated by walls/barriers from other workers				Employees located in close proximity to all workers

Method for Increasing Quality:

Scope of Work

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
Work performed *not* typical of co-workers				Work performed typical of co-workers

Method for Increasing Quality:

Personnel Status

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
Legally employed by third-party employer				Legally employed by host company

Method for Increasing Quality:

Pay, Benefits

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
				Pay and benefits based on productivity commensurate with wage of co-workers

Method for Increasing Quality:

Transportation

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
Arrive via segregated bus for people with disabilities				Arrive via car pools with co-workers or public transportation

Method for Increasing Quality:

Number/Size of Group

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
Larger number (more than 8); more than 1% of work force				Less than 8 in number; less than 1% of work force

Method for Increasing Quality:

Work Routines

Less Desirable — More Desirable

| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |

1 2 3 4 5

Different from co-workers — Same as co-workers

Method for Increasing Quality:

Staff Supervision

Less Desirable — More Desirable

| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |

1 2 3 4 5

Supervisor employed by third-party support organization — Supervisor employed directly by company

Method for Increasing Quality:

Supervisor/Employment Advocate Skills

Less Desirable — More Desirable

| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |

1 2 3 4 5

Low skills in industry practices and training/supervising of disabled workers

Understands company procedures and training/ supervision of disabled workers

Method for Increasing Quality:

Support Organization

Less Desirable — More Desirable

| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |

1 2 3 4 5

Highly visible in host company (present and acts as sub-contractor)

Maintains low visibility but assists company to maintain/support employment

Method for Increasing Quality:

Consumer Involvement in Planning

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
Pre-plannned and discussed with consumer				**Planned in partnership with consumer**

Method for Increasing Quality:

Ongoing Services

Less Desirable				More Desirable
1	2	3	4	5
Perfunctory checks at work site				**Provide services to maintain job and prepare for new responsibilities**

Method for Increasing Quality:

Integration with Non-disabled Persons

Less Desirable — More Desirable

| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |

1 2 3 4 5

Speaks infrequently with co-workers — Eats and socializes with co-workers

Method for Increasing Quality:

Business Involvement

Less Desirable — More Desirable

| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |

1 2 3 4 5

No involvement in building business coalition — Involvement in planning to meet staffing needs

Method for Increasing Quality:

Chapter 6

Resources and References

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

RESOURCE CENTERS

The following special projects, agencies, and associations provide technical assistance and/or staff training in supported employment:

The Association for Persons in Supported Employment
5001 Broad Street, Suite 34
Richmond, VA 23230
Contact: Wendy Wood

Boston University Psychiatric
Rehabilitation Center
1019 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
Contact: Karen Danley

The Employment Network Project
University of Oregon
135 College of Education
Eugene, OR 97403
Contact: David Mank, Jay Buckley, Larry Rhodes

Materials Development Center
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, WI 54751

National Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
PO Box 17675
Washington, DC 20041

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
1111 20th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Regional Information Exchanges

Region I: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire,
Rhode Island, Vermont
Ms. Deborah Roody, Project Director
Rehabilitation Network of New England
The Network, Inc.
300 Brickstone Square, Suite 900
Andover, MA 01810

Region II: New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands
Ms. Sheila Sarrett, Project Director
PEER Regional Network
National Center for Disability Services
201 I. U. Willets Road, West
Albertson, NY 1150

Region III: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland,
Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia
Mr. Richard C. Baron, Executive Director
Ms. Barbara Granger, Project Director
Matrix Research Institute
2979 School House Lane K106
Philadelphia, PA 19144

Region V: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin
Dr. David Johnson, Ph.D., Project Director
Ms. Teri Wallace, Center Coordinator
University of Minnesota
1919 University Avenue, 5th Floor
St. Paul, MN 55104

Region VI: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas
Dr. John D. Westbrook, Project Director
Regional Rehabilitation Exchange
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street
Austin, TX 78701-3281

Region IX: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Pacific Islands
Ms. Sherry Almandsmith, Project Director
Berkeley Planning Associates
440 Grand Avenue, Suite 500
Oakland, CA 94610

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
Virginia Commonwealth University
VCU Box 2011
Richmond, VA 23284-0001
Contact: Michael Barcus

Rehabilitation Services Administration
Switzer Building, Room 3228
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-2899

University of San Francisco Rehabilitation Administration
2130 Fulton Street, C-4 Campion Hall
San Francisco, CA 94117
Contact: Richard Robinson, Karen Flippo

University of Vermont
Department of Special Education
405A Waterman Building
Burlington, VT 05405
Contact: Michael Collins

U.S. Small Business Administration
Mail Code: 2550
1441 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20416

RESOURCE MATERIALS

General

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Working: Stories of Supported Employment (Videotape). 18 min. Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, 4900 North Lamar Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78751-2316.

Models

Brown, L., Shiraga, B., York, J., Kessler, L., Strohm, B., Rogan, R. P., Sweet, M., Zanella, K., Van Deventer, P., & Loomis, R. Integrated work opportunities for adults with severe handicaps: The extended training option. *The Journal of the Association for the Severely Handicapped*, 9(4), pp. 262-269.

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Social Security

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Attachments

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Attachment I

Supported Employment and You

SUPPORTED

EMPLOYMENT

AND

YOU

National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This material has been developed for use by staff of a community based independent living center. Information can be used in a variety of ways – independently by consumers or in portions as a part of a special employer presentation or training activity. These materials may be available on disk in a word processed format to allow you to "personalize" the information for your center and consumers. Braille and audio versions are available upon request.

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The contents of this publication were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, Department of Education, Cooperative Agreement #H133D80001. These contents however, do not necessarily represent the policy of that agency, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government. In compliance with appropriate state and federal laws and regulations, all programs administered by and all services provided by the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status, or the presence of a non-job-related medical condition or handicap. This publication of the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living project is made possible through a cooperative agreement of $175,000.00 from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) of the U. S. Department of Education. This project is funded 100% through federal funds.

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HOW CAN SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT HELP ME?

Supported Employment is a fairly new type of program that provides assistance to people with severe disabilities who are interested in:

- working in a regular job
- making money as a result of your ability to perform the work
- meeting and working with new people – some of whom may be disabled and many of whom will not have disabilities
- having a person help you learn your job at the place you will be working
- having a person check on how you are doing for as long as you hold your job
- having help with your special needs on the job

How you might benefit from becoming involved in Supported Employment depends upon many things.

BENEFITS

Some possible ways in which you might benefit are:

- making money
- feeling better about yourself
- making new contacts
- learning new skills on your job
- having a regular schedule and routine

HOW IS SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT?

Supported Employment is a special type of employment program. It provides assistance that is not usually present in a regular job setting. For instance, Supported Employment is different in the following ways:

- it is designed to meet the needs of people with severe disabilities who need help in getting and keeping a regular job
- pay is based upon a person's ability to produce or serve – pay can be below the minimum wage in order to allow a person to work and an employer to pay according to the amount for work performed
- work is performed in a regular work setting and you will work with many people who do not have disabilities
- a person, an Employment Advocate, goes to the job with you in the beginning; the Employment Advocate knows the job and helps you learn it; the Employment Advocate will come back after you have learned the job and can do it on your own to see if you need help with any other part of doing the job or to help you if the job changes for some reason
- for some people in Supported Employment, special group support sessions will be available to help you "think through" situations and feelings associated with the Supported Employment job
- determine what special type of help will be needed for you to keep your job and determine ways in which it will be provided for as long as you hold the job

THE EMPLOYMENT ADVOCATE

The Employment Advocate of the independent living center can help you solve problems about:

- where you live,
- how you get to and from work,
- special events that are happening in the community,
- problems in your work or life that you would like to talk to someone about,
- barriers you may encounter in accessing places/things,
- learning new skills to help you be more independent.

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT IS RIGHT FOR ME?

The first thing that you can do is contact your local independent living center. The Center can schedule a special orientation meeting for you to discuss Supported Employment and the kinds of activities that they can offer for persons with disabilities.

The Center may have a *Job Club* that you can join. This group is one that meets regularly to talk and think about what different types of employment may exist in your area. You will also talk about what kind of things you will need to do to be successful in your job. The Job Club may also take tours around town to various employers or have them come in and talk with you about working in their organization.

The Center may have *Special Classes* that will help you to get you ready for work. A person at the Center will help you learn what is covered in each of these and how it may help you. You may want to take some classes simply because they sound like fun to you.

The Center can arrange for a *Tour* of a special job that interests you. This provides an opportunity for you to make sure that you like the job before you start to work.

The Center will develop a *Plan* of the things that you want to accomplish with the help of staff at the Center. This plan will help you see what you will do and what people at the Center will do.

If the Center places you in a Supported Employment job, an Employment Advocate at the Center will provide *On-The-Job Training* for you. This will help you learn best how to do the job as your boss wants it to be done.

The Center will provide *Support* as you continue with your job. A person will check on how you are doing and see if you need help on your job. When you are not working you can still participate in other activities of the Center as you wish.

HOW WILL EMPLOYMENT AFFECT ME?

There are many positive benefits that can result from having a job.

A concern that many persons with disabilities have is, *"What will happen to my Social Security benefits?"*

It is always best to contact your local Social Security office and ask what will happen if you start to work and earn money. Generally, there is a certain amount of money that you can earn that will not affect your benefits and a point at which you may even lose some benefits.

There are two types of Social Security benefits. One is called SSI, or Supplemental Security Income. The other is called SSDI, or Social Security Disability Insurance. Depending upon which type of benefits you receive, employment may affect you differently. In addition, changes in where you live can affect your current benefits.

To be sure of the current regulations, you should contact the Social Security office. Your local Independent Living Center can help you in requesting information from your local Social Security office about any changes in your benefits that may result from employment.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE THROUGH MY INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER TO HELP ME?

Your local Independent Living Center offers a variety of activities that may be of interest to you. You should ask for a listing or schedule of these activities so that you can plan on participating in as many as you wish.

For Supported Employment, your local Independent Living Center has a process to follow if you are interested in finding a Supported Employment job. Generally, the steps in the process are:

① Attend an orientation session on Supported Employment

② Fill out an application form

③ Participate in an interview to determine your likes, dislikes, and goals

④ Assist in developing your Independent Living Plan, a description of what you will try to accomplish, along with staff and those activities that will help you accomplish your goals

⑤ Participate in all activities that are in your plan

TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN FINDING A SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT JOB YOU MUST

√ Participate in Job Club activities for at least 4 hours per week for 8-16 weeks.

√ Attend and participate in *special* meetings that may be scheduled, for example, to go on tours to visit employers.

√ Identify the type of work that you feel you would like and can be successful in doing.

√ Learn as much as you can about the job, the employer(s), the job duties, the work schedule, co-workers, and public transportation routes in order to make sure it is a job you will be able to do and will enjoy.

√ Listen to and learn from your Employment Advocate who will train you to perform your job at the place you work.

√ Let your Employment Advocate know about any problems that you are having that might affect your work such as problems at home, problems with co-workers, changes in the job routine, or others.

√ Participate in updating your Independent Living Plan to indicate the kinds of things that you would like to have some help in achieving or doing -- these do not necessarily involve your new Supported Employment job.

BEFORE YOU GO TO WORK YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO. .

... Arrive at work on time

... Follow a work schedule

... Handle transportation so you arrive at work on scheduled work days

... Schedule and get approval before taking time off from work

... Follow company rules and regulations

... Follow your supervisor's instructions

... Follow your company's safety rules

... Work with your Employment Advocate to address problems you may be having

Attachment II

# Supported Employment and the Family

SUPPORTED

EMPLOYMENT

FOR THE FAMILY

National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

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WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER?

An Independent Living Center is an organization that provides services to persons with disabilities. Most cities have an Independent Living Center that works with persons with disabilities who live within the community. Independent Living Centers are governed by a Board of Directors that identifies "gaps" or "needs" within the community and organizes to address them. Each Independent Living Center can provide different services based upon these identified needs, but an Independent Living Center will generally provide services in several of the following areas:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Self-Improvement Independent Living Skills
- Peer Counseling
- Community Integration
- Advocacy
- Employment-Related Services/Supported Employment
- Information and Referral

Independent Living Centers were begun because persons with disabilities identified many "gaps" that existed in the human service system. Today community-based Independent Living Centers are governed and operated by persons with disabilities for persons with disabilities.

WHAT IS SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT?

Supported Employment has been described functionally in the following way.

> Supported Employment is paid employment in which appropriate ongoing services are provided to employees who are severely disabled in order for the individual to work productively. Specifically, employees (who are severely disabled) in a Supported Employment setting must:
>
> (a) be engaged in part-time or full-time employment paid at a wage commensurate with the individual's production of goods or services, and based upon current competitive per-unit rates;
>
> (b) need and be provided continuous, high intensity or periodic, ongoing support services in order to maintain employment including support and assistance provided employers; and,
>
> (c) be provided opportunities during the work day to integrate with non-disabled individuals other than those providing direct ongoing support services to employees.

You may be wondering how Supported Employment is different from other types of employment or employment-assistance programs. As a summary, the items below identify the most salient characteristics of Supported Employment.

- Supported Employment was designed for **persons with severe disabilities** who need assistance in obtaining and keeping a regular job in a regular work environment.
- The **pay** earned by a person in Supported Employment is based upon a person's ability to produce or provide a service--with special permission an employer may pay below the minimum wage if records are kept to show an employee's rate of production.

- Work is performed in a **regular work setting** during regular work hours for the company and with many persons who do not have disabilities.
- Supported Employment provides **on-the-job training** in the work setting so that one learns in the actual setting and with the actual equipment and materials that he/she is expected to work.
- As the person with a severe disability learns the job the training will lessen in frequency and intensity until only twice a month training is provided for as long as the person is in the job -- referred to as **ongoing services**.

Traditional employment assistance programs are different from the Supported Employment program. Some persons with disabilities can more appropriately be served by the traditional employment approach. Others, such as persons with severe disabilities, need the different approach of Supported Employment. To illustrate the differences the following chart is provided.

Supported Employment Assistance	Traditional Employment Assistance
Goals:	
To maintain paid employment in a regular job and work setting	To develop skills/abilities in a person that result in employment
Training:	
Training is done at the actual work site using the actual tools and environment in which he/she is expected to perform	Training is provided in an environment away from the actual work site before employment actually begins
Integration with Non-Disabled Persons:	
Integration is assured as a part of the employment characteristics by definition	Integration is not necessarily a part of the employment placement
Income:	
Pay is received during the on-the-job training activities and is a key outcome	Pay is not received during training activities and is not a planned part of the assistance program
Stability:	
Employment is stable in that paid employment is not interrupted due to seasonal or contractual circumstances	Employment may be interrupted due to contract circumstances and/or seasons of the year

A Brief Legislative History of Supported Employment

(From: New Mexico Supported Employment Planning Project, September 1989)

The term "supported employment" originated in the early 1980's when advocates and service providers for persons with developmental disabilities became increasingly aware that special education students were not making the transition from high school to the competitive labor force. Despite all the progress that had been made since the passage of the Education of the Handicapped Act (P.L. 94-142), there were few jobs available for special education graduates, and few adult services that offered opportunities for community integration.

In 1984, Madeleine Will (then Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, or OSERS), defined a conceptual model of issues and programming designed to address the problems associated with the transition of youth with disabilities from school to work and adult life. That same year, Congress passed two key pieces of legislation: the 1984 Amendments to the Education of the Handicapped Act (P.L. 98-199), which cited the lack of transitional services for special education students, and the Developmental Disabilities Act of 1984 (P.L. 98-527), which provided a mandate for addressing employment-related activities as a major priority. Supported employment was one of the "employment related" activities specifically defined in P.L. 98-527.

Although neither of these laws actually created an entitlement for employment, they clearly recognized the importance of work to the independence and community integration of persons with developmental disabilities. In 1985, Congress appropriated $3.7 million for supported employment, and OSERS and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities jointly funded Supported Employment Demonstration Projects in ten states. In 1986, this initiative was expanded to include 27 states.

The legislative history of supported employment for persons with serious and persistent psychiatric disabilities is somewhat different. In contrast to the developmental disabilities system, there was never an issue of "transition" from a comprehensive, mandated program (such as special education into adult life). Rather, the major problem was the virtual lack of access for people disabled by severe mental illness to any kind of vocational rehabilitation services.

Historically, mental health legislation and services has paid little attention to vocational needs. No direct reference to vocational rehabilitation was included in either the original Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) legislation of 1963 (P.L. 88-164) or in the CMHC Amendments of 1975 (P.L. 94-63).

During the 1960's and 1970's, however, a number of successful independent, transitional work programs for "chronically mentally ill" were developed based on Fountain House, the Fairweather Lodge program and other similar models. The psychosocial rehabilitation movement incorporated many of the same principles currently viewed as critical to supported employment, including work in real job settings, the need for ongoing support systems, and acceptance of seriously disabled clients as capable of paid work.

In the mid-1970's, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) formulated the concept of a "Community Support System" delineating the nature and organization of services and supports necessary for people with severe psychiatric disabilities to live productively in the community. For the first time, the importance of rehabilitation and the possibility of returning "chronically mentally ill" people to the work force was given serious attention by mental health policy makers. Thus, NIMH created a new set of beliefs about the potential of people with psychiatric disabilities, just as P.L. 94-142 had for people with developmental disabilities. In 1978 the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and NIMH signed a collaborative agreement, and in 1984, an interagency work-group was established to improve services to "chronically mentally ill" persons.

In 1986, the National Council on the Handicapped along with advocates for the psychiatrically disabled, the developmentally disabled, and persons disabled by head injuries joined forces to push for amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112) that would improve services to all persons with severe disabilities. That year Congress passed the Rehabilitation Amendments of 1986 (P.L. 99-506).

P.L. 99-506 specifically includes people with severe psychiatric disabilities, and strengthens the definition of "severely handicapped". It also redefines "employability" to include part-time work, emphasizes the need for functional assessments, authorizes the use of rehabilitation grant funds for supported employment, and creates a separate grant program to assist states in the development of supported employment services.

Title VI-C of the 1986 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act authorized grants to selected state vocational rehabilitation agencies to help states develop programs with the appropriate public and private non-profit agencies which would provide the supported employment option for individuals with severe disabilities. Title VI-C also provided state vocational rehabilitation agencies with the option of first applying for a planning grant to prepare for the implementation of a system of supported employment services prior to actually delivering the services.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Supported Employment can occur in different ways. These have been referred to as different "options" because they provide variable ways in which the needs of persons with disabilities, employers, and communities may be met. Your local Independent Living Center may "specialize" in only one of these options.

Individual Placement

A person with disabilities identifies an available job that meets his/her individual needs. The job is thoroughly analyzed by the Employment Advocate who functions as a co-worker, job trainer, and advocate for the person with disabilities. In Supported Employment the person with disabilities becomes an employee of the organization on his/her first day. The employee with disabilities is employed just like all the other employees. Employees with disabilities do not have special places to work, different hours, or fewer benefits simply because they are persons with disabilities. The Employment Advocate is an employee of the local Independent Living Center and works alongside the employee with a disability for as long as is necessary for him/her to perform the duties of the job in a manner satisfactory to the employer. The Employment Advocate will gradually "fade" from the work site until only twice a month support sessions are necessary. These sessions can include re-training on tasks or providing support off-site concerning work or other life situations.

Entrepreneurial or Small Business Option

In this type of Supported Employment environment, an actual business is formed around a workforce of persons both with and without disabilities. The business can perform any type of productive money-making activity. The jobs of persons with disabilities are described in terms of what needs to be done, as are all of the other jobs. No differences exist in benefits, or the way in which workers are treated because of their disability. Opportunities for integration are afforded through the non-disabled members of the workforce. The business may or may not interact with the public on a routine basis. The entrepreneurial model can be quite effective and beneficial in remote rural environments where a variety of employers may not exist.

Enclave

An enclave is a group of up to eight persons with disabilities working among non-disabled co-workers in a business activity. Enclaves can exist in any type of business or industry but many occur in large businesses. The Enclave option provides a way of providing the on-the-job training within a group. Members of the Enclave will probably not start work at the same time so that training can be provided on more of an individual basis for a period of time. Persons in the Supported Employment Enclave are often paid based upon their individual ability to produce a particular unit. Because Enclaves occur within the business/industry setting, integration with non-disabled co-workers is a planned part of the Supported Employment activity.

Mobile Work Crew

This option of Supported Employment involves fewer than eight persons, some of whom are persons with severe disabilities and some of whom are not. This "mix" of workers is important because Mobile Work Crews tend to be removed from many opportunities to integrate with the non-disabled public. Each crew has a supervisor who trains, coaches, and advocates for the workers with disabilities. Mobile Work Crews can perform a variety of activities ranging from janitorial services to specialized computer operations. Care must be taken in planning and establishing Mobile Work Crews, however, to ensure that the work performed is not temporary or seasonal in nature. All members of the crew should be paid the same and provided the same benefits.

BENEFITS OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

There are many benefits associated with employment and Supported Employment. Generally speaking, employment:

- helps an individual feel more positive about himself/herself
- provides an opportunity to contribute to the community by earning wages and paying taxes
- creates a new way of interacting with people
- produces new friends and colleagues
- allows one to be more independent
- enhances feelings of security and independence by making money

These characteristics also apply to Supported Employment. We might identify additional benefits of the Supported Employment program as including:

- the identification of an employment opportunity that otherwise might not exist
- a method for addressing specialized training needs
- an opportunity to work in a wide range of settings for pay
- a job that provides opportunities for integration with non-disabled persons
- pay that is fairly determined based upon skills and abilities

Supported Employment is a service option that provides benefits to a number of persons.

The person with a disability receives an opportunity for paid employment which leads to relationships, community participation, skill development, economic self-sufficiency, the exercise of choice, and dignity and respect.

Family members have the opportunity to see their loved one as a productive, contributing member of society. Additionally, they may have increased freedom to pursue their own activities as well as employment.

Business benefits from increased labor resources provided by supported employment. Persons with disabilities have a reputation for reliable work production with low absenteeism and low accident rates.

Society benefits because more persons are actively engaged in commerce and the production of goods and services. Persons with disabilities, through their activities and greater economic self-sufficiency, make contributions to society and are less dependent on government resources.

THE EMPLOYMENT ADVOCATE

An Employment Advocate is a person hired by your local Independent Living Center to assist persons with severe disabilities in the Supported Employment program. Employment Advocates perform a wide variety of activities before, during, and after the Supported Employment placement.

The Employment Advocate helps by: (1) providing opportunities to learn about different types of work and work environments for persons with severe disabilities who may have had limited exposure to employment. (2) identifying grooming and dressing needs associated with a particular work selection, and (3) developing jobs that are desired by the person with a disability.

In addition, the Employment Advocate helps the person with disabilities to keep the Supported Employment job by:

- working in the desired job before the person with disabilities is placed, in order to demonstrate how to do the job correctly and to provide training
- working alongside the person with disabilities in order to train and model the appropriate behaviors associated with the job
- assessing performance and identifying ways in which it may be improved
- reinforcing the person with disabilities for a job well done
- monitoring the continued success of the person with disabilities in the job and providing re-training or other support as it may be needed or desired

The Employment Advocate can even help with those areas of living which support an individual's ability to continue working. Some of these include:

- helping solve problems with the public transportation system, especially when routes are changed

- assisting in identification of alternate accessible housing
- conducting special sessions outside the work environment to help in meeting social or emotional problems
- advocating for several persons in Supported Employment when "barriers" exist that limit access to persons with disabilities

The Employment Advocate will be on the job the first day the person in the Supported Employment job reports for work. The Employment Advocate will continue to teach, model, advocate, and support the new Supported Employment worker until he/she can perform the necessary tasks independently and according to company standards. When this level of performance has been reached, the Employment Advocate will gradually fade from the worksite. The Employment Advocate will periodically check with the employer concerning continued satisfaction and observe/work with the Supported Employment worker twice a month to make sure the job is being performed satisfactorily.

SOCIAL SECURITY

One of the most frequently expressed concerns regarding Supported Employment involves Social Security benefits. Social Security is a federal government program sustained by a set of regulations that are frequently being changed. For that reason it is very important that you contact your local Social Security office and inquire about potential changes in Social Security benefits if you or a member of your family goes into Supported Employment. Changes have been made to the Social Security regulations to try *not* to penalize someone for taking the initiative to go to work. We have attempted to make what is said here current with the regulations at the time of writing. It is likely that other modifications have occurred since this writing that you should know about in order to take advantage of them.

Establishing a Two-Way Communication with the Social Security Office

(Excerpted from: *Supported Employment: A Handbook for Parents,*
Oklahoma Supported Employment Project)

Just as most people base important career decisions on the broadest amount of information available, so too must the disabled person and his or her family have access to such information in order to determine if entering Supported Employment is truly their best option.

The Social Security representative is the person that can supply you with such information so that a decision can be made wisely. The short and long term impact for each individual is different based upon the benefits they receive. For this reason the exchange of information with the provider is vital. Through this process, it is hoped the improved relationship between the Social Security Administration and the disabled person and family leads to a system which encourages the disabled person to enter the work force without fear for the loss of benefits he/she needs to survive or may need again.

Effective communication assures all parties have the information necessary to determine the best direction for the disabled worker. It is hoped that all parties involved will have the information necessary to accurately assess the best direction for the worker prior to investment of vast amounts of time and resources in a situation that may fail due to unexpected problems with Social Security benefits.

Communication with the Social Security Administration is a very important step in the decision to work. It is particularly important in the event that there are changes in the individual's job, the level of support, or for those workers whose income varies month-to-month.

SOCIAL SECURITY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How will my disabled family member's Social Security benefits be affected by working on a supported job?

Most people with severe disabilities already qualify for Social Security benefits of SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and Medicaid before becoming employed. Until recently, working on a job, even one that only pays minimum wage, could jeopardize continued access to those benefits. This loss was often cited by parents as a reason for their reluctance and caution in supporting integrated employment.

In 1987 there were significant changes in the Social Security Law that allow disabled workers to earn more income without totally jeopardizing their SSI checks. Further, if the disabled worker earns enough to gradually "phaseout" the SSI income check, Medicaid benefits can continue for an unlimited time period.

How can we make sure that our disabled family member can increase earnings and continue to receive the benefits of SSI and Medicaid?

First it is CRITICAL that you and the job coach sit down with a Social Security Work Incentive Liaison and request that the disabled person be transferred to provisions under the Social Security Law 1619 (a) and 1619 (b) BEFORE work begins. This law qualifies the disabled worker for special work incentives.

"1619 (a)" refers to a permanent change in the law that allows a person receiving Supplemental Security Income to retain SSI income payments on a sliding scale as wages increase. The sliding scale of special benefits is based on the disabled person's income. Under this law, cash benefits are continued as an incentive to work. For example, a disabled individual receiving a $354 SSI income supplement check with no additional income before the start of the new job can earn up to $793 before reaching the Social Security "break even point" and SSI payments stop. As the disabled person's income increases two dollars, SSI payments are reduced by one dollar until a "break even point" is reached.

"1619 (b)" refers to a permanent change in the law that protects the disabled person from loss of Medicaid benefits as an additional incentive to work. Even if the disabled worker surpasses the "break even point" of earned income, Medicaid benefits are only discontinued if a disabled worker's income or work benefits would allow the purchase of equivalent health insurance or would allow the worker to take advantage of a company's health insurance plan.

Where can we find out more about these new work incentives in the Social Security law?

Ask for a copy of the Social Security publication commonly called "The Red Book." The full title of the publication is "A Summary Guide to Social Security and Supplemental Security Income Work Incentives for the Disabled and Blind." Be sure the publication was printed in July 1987 or later. A helpful Social Security pamphlet describing work incentives is "Benefits for Disabled People Who Return to Work."

Is it difficult to figure the "break even point"?

No. In the following example a few assumptions were made about a disabled person receiving SSI:

A. The disabled person received $354 in SSI payments for basic living expenses each month.

B. The disabled person received no unearned income from sources other than SSI.

C. Because of the person's disability, he or she is unable to drive and pays $40 a month to a car pool to get back and forth to work each day.

SAMPLE BREAK EVEN POINT WORK SHEET

(1.) Amount of SSI check: $354
(2.) Amount of gross earnings: $385
(3.) Gross earning minus the standard $65 earned income exclusion: $385

- 65
$320

(4.) Subtract the standard $20 general exclusion:

- 20
$300

(5.) Subtract any work related expenses: (transportation)

- 40
$260

(6.) Divide by 2 to determine the "countable income": $130

(7.) Subtract the "countable income" from the original SSI check amount (step 1.) to estimate the amount of the revised SSI check:

$354
-130
$224

TOTAL INCOME **BEFORE** EMPLOYMENT PER MONTH = **$354**

TOTAL INCOME **AFTER** EMPLOYMENT (Earnings + SSI) = **$609**

ESTIMATE BREAK EVEN POINT

Note: Example is for demonstration purposes only.

Assumption: Disabled worker receives SSI only and does not have any other unearned income prior to becoming employed. Those persons receiving SSDI payments, Veterans benefits or other types of unearned income should consult a Social Security Work Incentive Liaison for an accurate estimate.

(1.) Amount of SSI check .... ________

(2.) Amount of gross earnings .... ________

(3.) Subtract the standard earned income exclusion from gross earnings (line 2 minus $65) .... ________

(4.) Subtract the standard general exclusion from step 3. (line 3 minus $20) .... ________

(5.) Subtract impairment-related work expenses. See below *. (line 4 minus amount spent each month for expenses) .... ________

(6.) To determine "countable income" divide Line 5 by 2 .... ________

(7.) Subtract the "countable income" from the original SSI check amount to estimate the amount revised SSI check after gross earnings. (Subtract line 6 from line 1.) .... ________

TOTAL INCOME BEFORE EMPLOYMENT (Same as Line 1) .... ________

TOTAL INCOME AFTER EMPLOYMENT (line 2 plus Line 7) .... ________

*Impairment-Related Work Expenses: Certain impairment related work expenses *you pay for* can be deducted from earnings. It doesn't matter if you need the item(s) or services for work or daily living. Social Security must approve each deduction. Some examples of allowable work related expenses are: medical devices or expendable supplies, attendant care services to get ready for work, transportation, work related equipment, drugs and medical services, home modifications, costs related to guide dogs or other expenses such as extra supervision on the job to maintain the success of the worker.

Utilization of the Social Security Work Incentive: Impairment-Related Work Expense

Developed by: Susan O'Mara, Tom Emmons, Wendy Wood, and Frances Koehler

© Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), Member Service Document - IRWE Package, February 8, 1989, 5001 West Broad Street, Suite 34, Richmond, VA 23230, (804) 282-3655

Impairment-Related Work Expense (IRWE) is a work incentive option available to individuals who are Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. This incentive is available through the Social Security Administration to help individuals with disabilities recover expenses incurred to support their work activity. Examples of these expenses might be paying for supported employment follow-along services, special transportation to get to and from work, attendant care support on the job or assisting the individual getting to and from work, medical support devices, work equipment, and more. In addition, these costs are deductible even if the item or service is also needed to carry out daily living unrelated to your work. These are expenses which would not be necessary for individuals who are non-handicapped for gaining and maintaining employment.

IRWEs apply to both SSDI beneficiaries and SSI recipients who are disabled (SSI recipients who are blind may qualify for the Blind Work Expense provision). The IRWE provision allows for certain costs or expenses to be excluded in calculating earnings and SGA. For an SSDI beneficiary, deducting an IRWE may keep monthly gross earnings below SGA. For an SSI recipient, deducting the cost of an IRWE may also be utilized in the initial SSDI and/or SSI eligibility process to reduce an individual's income thus qualifying him under the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) test.

For an IRWE deduction to be allowable:

- the expenses must be directly related to enabling the individual to work where such expense is not generally required by individuals without impairment in the community;
- the cost must be paid by the individual and not be reimbursable from other sources;

- the expense must be paid in a month in which the individual is or was working; and
- the expense must be reasonable.

The SSA list of allowable expenditures under IRWE is extensive and includes costs of adaptive equipment or specialized devices, attendant care, and specialized transportation costs. Documentation of such costs is submitted to the SSA which is responsible for making the IRWE determination.

A list of expenses which are allowable as IRWE deductions as well as a list of expenses which are NOT allowable is provided below:

Deductible and Non-Deductible Expenses within the IRWE Program

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Deductible

- Services provided by a supported employment specialist (job coach) to help an individual obtain and maintain gainful employment.

Note - An individual with a disability who is considering using the IRWE option may want to weigh the following factors:

(1) The expenses incurred during the initial support phases of supported employment are usually higher than can be comfortably accommodated within the monthly income amount the individual receives in income support or benefit payment. Therefore, it may be advisable to utilize the IRWE option as a funding source for the follow-along phase of support rather than the initial support phase. (It may be more beneficial to utilize a PASS in the initial support phase.)

(2) Utilization of other funding sources, (i.e., VR Services, MH/MR, DD Services, etc.) with funds appropriated for the purpose of employment support services should continue. This will avoid relaxation of demands on these sources, thus averting a miscalculated assessment of funding needs.

ATTENDANT CARE SERVICES

Deductible

- Performed in the work setting.
- Performed in the process of assisting in preparing for work, the trip to and from work and after work (e.g., bathing, dressing, cooking, eating).
- Services which may incidentally also benefit the family (e.g.,

cooking meal for individual also eaten by family).

- Services performed by a family member for a cash fee where the family member suffers an economic loss by reducing or terminating work in order to perform such services.

Not Deductible

- Performed on non-workdays or involving shopping or general homemaking (e.g., cleaning, laundry).
- Services performed for someone in family other than beneficiary (e.g., baby sitter).
- Services performed by a family member for a cash fee where the family member suffers *no* economic loss.
- Services performed by a family member for payment "in kind" (e.g., room and board) whether or not the family member suffers economic loss.

TRANSPORTATION COSTS

Deductible

- The cost of structural or operational modifications to a vehicle paid for by the individual in order to drive or be driven to work, even if the vehicle is also used for non-work purposes.

WORK RELATED EQUIPMENT AND ASSISTANTS

Deductible

- One-handed typewriters, typing aids (e.g., page-turning devices), measuring instruments, reading aids for individuals who are blind, electronic visual aids, braille devices, telecommunications devices for individuals who are deaf, and special work tools. Expenses for a person who serves as a reader (for individuals who are blind) qualifies, as does an interpreter for an individual who is deaf.

Not Deductible

- Any work-related devices not paid for by the person with a disability or, in the case of a self-employed individual, equipment previously deducted as a business expense.

RESIDENTIAL MODIFICATIONS

Deductible

- Individual Employed Outside Home - Modifications to the exterior of the house which permit access to the street or to transportation mode (e.g., exterior ramps, exterior railings, pathways, etc.).

- Individual Self-Employed at Home - Modifications made inside the home in order to create a working space to accommodate a person's impairment (e.g., enlargement of a doorway leading into an office space to accommodate problems in mobility or dexterity, etc.)

Not Deductible

- Individual Employed Outside Home - Modifications to the house primarily intended to facilitate functioning in the home environment (e.g., enlargements of interior door frames, lowering of kitchen appliances and bathroom facilities, interior railings, stairway chairlift, etc.).
- Individual Self-Employed at Home - Any modification expenses previously deducted as a business expense in determining performance of substantial gainful activity.

ROUTINE DRUGS AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Deductible

- Regularly prescribed medical treatment or therapy that is necessary for control of a disabling condition (even if unsuccessful) such as anticonvulsant drugs or blood level monitoring, radiation treatment or chemotherapy, corrective surgery for spinal disorders, antidepressant medication, etc. A visit to a physician's office is necessary to obtain these services.

Not Deductible

- Drugs and/or medical services used for only minor physical or mental problems (e.g., routine physical examinations, allergy treatment, dental examinations, optician services, etc.)

DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES

Deductible

- Objective of procedure must be related to the control, treatment, or evaluation of a disabling condition (e.g., electroencephalograms, brain scans, etc.)

Not Deductible

- Procedure paid for by other sources (e.g., vocational rehabilitation agency, Medicaid) or not related to a disabling condition (e.g., allergy testing).

NONMEDICAL APPLIANCES AND DEVICES

Deductible

- In unusual circumstances when devices or appliances are essential for the control of a disabling condition either at home or in the work setting (e.g., an electronic air cleaner for an individual with severe respiratory disease) and this is verified by a physician.

Not Deductible

- Devices used at home or at the office not ordinarily used for medical purposes (e.g., portable room heaters, air conditioners, humidifiers, dehumidifiers, etc.) and for which the individual has no verified medical work-related need.

SIMILAR ITEMS AND SERVICES

Deductible

- Medical supplies of an expendable nature (e.g., incontinence pads, elastic stocking, catheters, etc.).
- The cost of a seeing-eye dog including food, licenses, and veterinarian services.

Not Deductible

- An exercise bicycle or other device used for physical fitness purposes unless verified as necessary by a physician.

References

O'Mara, S. (1989). *Social Security benefits manual.* Printed by the Virginia Office of Supported Employment, Richmond, VA. Unpublished manual.

Social Security Administration (1988). *A guide to Social Security and Supplemental Security Income work incentives for the disabled and blind.* Office of the Disability, SSA Pub. No. 64-030.

CALCULATION COMPARISONS of USING IRWE to FUND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FOLLOW-ALONG SERVICES: EFFECTS ON AN SSI OR SSDI WORKER'S INCOME

The following examples are provided to illustrate how an individual's monthly income would be affected by deducting IRWE. The IRWE being utilized in these examples demonstrates using the IRWE deduction for an individual recipient/beneficiary to pay for his or her own supported employment (SE) follow-along services. In both examples the first set of calculations illustrates the individual's gross monthly income *without* using an IRWE with the second set of calculations showing the effects *with* using the IRWE work incentive option.

As IRWE does not provide for a full reimbursement of expenditures to the individual, the individual's level of income and financial needs must be considered when deciding whether or not to utilize the IRWE work incentive option. For some individuals other funding sources may not be available, and it will be up to the individual to determine his or her need for employment support versus his or her financial needs.

The calculations in Example I show that the IRWE enables the individual receiving SSI to recover exactly half of the expenses incurred for the purchase of SE follow-along services.

EXAMPLE I:

CASE EXAMPLE *WITHOUT* USING IRWE

Mr. Jones, a person with a disability and an SSI recipient, works in the community for which he receives $401 per month. His only other source of funds is his SSI check.

Payment calculation:

$401 Gross Earned Income
-20 General Income Exclusion
$381
-65 Earned Income Exclusion
$316
-158 1/2 Remaining Exclusion

$386 SSI Federal Benefit Rate
-158 Countable Income
$228 Net SSI

INCOME AVAILABLE

$401 Gross Earned Income
+228 Net SSI
$629 **Total Income**

CASE EXAMPLE *WITH* USING IRWE

Mr. Jones decides that he needs some support from a supported employment program in order to keep his job. He arranges to pay for about 8 hours of follow-along support services per month (8 hrs @ $25/hour) which will cost him $200 per month.

Payment calculation:

$401 Gross Earned Income
-20 General Income Exclusion
$381
-65 Earned Income Exclusion
$316
- 200 IRWE
$116
-58 1/2 Remaining Exclusion
$ 58 Countable Income

$386 SSI Federal Benefit Rate
-58 Countable Income
$328 Net SSI

INCOME AVAILABLE

$401 Gross Earned Income
+328 Net SSI
$729 Income
- 200 IRWE
$529 **Usable Income**

SSDI beneficiaries are given a 9-month trial work period during which they can test their ability to work and continue to receive their full SSDI benefit, regardless of the amount of their monthly earnings. Once they have accumulated 9-months of trial work, however, their benefit check would stop if they are determined to be engaging in substantial gainful work activity (SGA). This is usually determined to be average countable gross earnings over $500.00 per month (as of January, 1990). EXAMPLE II illustrates that an IRWE may enable an SSDI beneficiary earning over the SGA level to receive a full SSDI benefit check by reducing the amount of monthly gross earnings below the SGA level.

EXAMPLE II:

Case example *without* using IRWE.

Ms. Smith, a person with a disability receiving an SSDI benefit of $450.00 per month, works in the community for which she receives $660.00 gross earnings per month. During her 9-month trial work period her monthly income consists of her earnings plus her full SSDI benefit check. At the conclusion of her 9-month trial work period, a continuing disability review is conducted. Due to having average earnings in excess of $500.00 per month, she is determined to be engaging in SGA. Ms. Smith will receive her full SSDI check for 3 additional months and then it will stop. For each subsequent month that she earns above the SGA level, her total monthly income will consist of her earnings only, (i.e., she will not be eligible for an SSDI benefit check, as per example below). In months where her earnings are below SGA she will receive her check.

$660.00 earnings
+ 0.00 SSDI
$660.00 monthly income

Case example *using* IRWE.

(This is essentially a false comparison. By definition, persons needing Supported Employment would not be able to maintain employment with support. Without having previously paid for services, the individual would not have had a job and, therefore, would have had $0 earned income.)

After 12 months of employment, Ms. Smith arranges to pay for the 8 hours of SE follow-along services she receives each month. At $25.00 an hour the services will cost her $200.00 per month. The expense is approved by the SSA as an IRWE. In making a determination of SGA, each month the dollar amount of the IRWE is subtracted from Ms. Smith's gross monthly earnings.

$660.00	gross monthly earnings
- 200.00	IRWE
$460.00	amount of monthly gross earnings counted in making determination of SGA

Due to the fact that the IRWE reduces her average countable gross earnings below the SGA level, Ms. Smith is determined to *not* be engaging in SGA and therefore receives her full SSDI benefit check. For each subsequent month that her IRWE expense reduces her gross earnings below the SGA level, Ms. Smith's monthly income will consist of her earnings *plus* her full SSDI benefit check.

$ 660.00	earnings
+ 450.00	SSDI
$1110.00	monthly income
- 200.00	IRWE
$ 910.00	net income

EXAMPLE I demonstrates that an individual receiving SSI will recoup exactly one-half of the work related expense for which he/she is paying, while EXAMPLE II shows an SSDI beneficiary recouping the full amount of the work related expense. IRWE will not always provide for a full reimbursement. The following two conditions must be met for this to occur:

(1) The cost of the IRWE is substantial enough to reduce average countable gross earnings below SGA, thus enabling the individual to qualify for the SSDI benefit; and

(2) The dollar amount of the SSDI benefit is equal to (or greater than) the cost of the IRWE.

HOW THE FAMILY CAN HELP OR HINDER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Many times the family of a person with disabilities will, in the spirit of helping, pledge to do something to assist the family member in his/her Supported Employment activities. Daily life is all about helping and sharing with those in the family. Most of the time members of the family couldn't make it without this type of sharing. But in other cases, the "help" turns out not to help at all. Here is an example:

> *Betty has been working with her Employment Advocate in thinking about Supported Employment jobs and what she would like to do. She was taken on several tours of different types of work environments to see many different jobs. She decided that she wanted to work as a Clerical Assistant at the Harris Company. The family was called in to discuss the plans and to participate in the development of the Independent Living Plan for Betty. In thinking about Betty and what she would need to work in the job, the subject of transportation came up. The Harris Company was on the city bus route but Betty did not know how to use the bus system. Members of the family said that they wanted to take Betty to and from work themselves. The Employment Advocate noted that the family would take Betty to and from work daily. After Betty was placed in the job, the family member that was supposed to get Betty to work became ill and couldn't drive. No other member of the family could drive nor had time at that point in the day to help Betty get to work. The family became tired of dealing with Betty's transportation problems. Betty lost her job with the Harris Company because she was frequently absent.*

In this example, Betty's best interests would have been served by letting Betty become as independent as possible. In this case, that would have meant helping Betty learn how to use the city bus system to take care of her own transportation needs. The family did not realize the difficulties that would be created when they did not fulfill their role.

In this case, Betty was unable to retain her job because she was not able to learn the city bus system in time. It is best for families to allow persons with disabilities to try to be as independent as possible. Without meaning to, Betty's family created a transportation problem for her.

IS EVERYONE SUCCESSFUL IN SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT?

Unfortunately, everyone that enters a Supported Employment program is not successful in moving into a job and maintaining it over time. The reasons people fail in Supported Employment appear to be as varied as the people themselves. Sometimes the reason for the failure is out of the control of the person with disabilities. Sometimes persons placed in a Supported Employment job realize that they do not like the job, co-workers, the work schedule, the stress associated with the work, the time involved in getting to and from a particular job, the pay or benefits of the job, the supervisor, the job duties, or the characteristics of the work place such as heat, smell, noise or many others.

Members of the family and others should recognize that failure in a specific Supported Employment placement may not have to do with the work. The reason could have to do with some behaviors or characteristics of the individual with disabilities. In other cases, it may be that a person simply was not able to work with the necessary speed and accuracy to please a particular employer. These are situations that might be alleviated by finding another Supported Employment placement. In other cases it may mean that Supported Employment does not meet the needs of the person with disabilities at the current time.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is frequently cited by persons with disabilities as their number one problem in obtaining/maintaining employment. It is an area of life that is subject to change at any point in time. A change in a bus route, a dead battery, an accident, or any number of other things can cause routine transportation to be undependable. Even routine transportation can from time-to-time not meet transportation needs.

Developing an accessible transportation system in your city may be a need. Advocates within your local Independent Living Center may be able to work with you to create positive changes in the transportation area.

Two articles regarding transportation are included for you to review. They are: *If At First You Don't Succeed* and *For People with Disabilities, Getting to Work is Career Challenge.*

If at First You Don't Succeed

by Carrie Smoot

People with disabilities deal with may barriers as they look for positions commensurate with their education, talents, and experience. Too many people are quick to say, "This will never work!" when they come across such daunting prospects as transportation difficulties, attitudinal barriers, and accommodation problems.

I agree with the various sources which indicate that transportation may be the leading cause of unemployment among people with disabilities. When I learned of my inability to drive, I got over my disappointment and put my motorized wheelchair in good working order. I was ready to start the great adventure of using public transportation (lift bus and subway) in this area.

It seems that there are no limitations here; after all, I and other wheelchair users are traveling independently on a daily basis. However, those of us who must ride public lift buses cannot do so spontaneously. Not all buses are equipped with lifts, so the passenger must call ahead 24 hours to reserve a single trip or to make any change in a route that already has a lift bus on it.

Further, many commuters must transfer buses to get to work. That is fine for an ambulatory person, who can stand on a corner and wait for the next one.

However, people using chairs increase the chances of being delayed if they use more than one lift bus. Calling in multiple reservations would likely increase the chance of mix-ups. Also, the buses often used are older, and they have lifts that break down easily. If one lift was not working properly, the passenger would miss his or her connection and have to wait for another bus to be sent. Since so many businesses are not accessible by riding just on bus, a job applicant who uses a wheelchair is forced to limit applications to those only on a direct bus or subway line. In this way, the applicant loses opportunities to show a potential employer his or her value to an organization.

For motorized chair users, there is an added difficulty in boarding the bus. If an older one is used, the initial turning space is considerably narrower than on newer buses. If a rider has a wide chair, it is difficult not to hit the chair against something. Even with the assistance of bus drivers, dealing with this on a daily basis contributes to the overall wear and tear of the wheelchair. After a time, it needs repairs. Not only does this cost a great deal of money, but independence is also lost. In extreme cases, there are missed interviews or time on the job--especially if coordinating rides cannot be accomplished immediately.

What can be done about these problems? One solution is to find a carpool or vanpool by advertising, asking co-workers, or riding with family members. Talking with other friends who have transportation difficulties may also generate some solutions. If all buses newly purchased by public and private transit systems were equipped with lifts, the transportation barrier would be eliminated, and more opportunities created for fuller lives. The Americans with Disabilities Act, if passed into law, would make this a reality.

But a carpool is a way of depending on others, and public transportation preserves independence. What are some other options? If the individual has decided in favor of using public transportation, writing to the transit system offices might produce results. Businesses are interested in serving customers' needs, and a transit system is no exception. The proper people need to be told--verbally and in writing--about the specific problems that people with disabilities are having with the current system. If these riders are assertive enough, perhaps something will be done to solve them. (Of course, it doesn't hurt to let the proper people know about positive experiences.)

When I began my job search, friends and family told me to expect discrimination from employers because of my disability, but I wasn't too concerned about it. What concerned me was being out of college for a while and not having enough long-term work experience--one of many concerns that other young people looking for their first jobs have. I filled out numerous applications and interviewed for writing, editing, proofreading, and clerical positions and still wasn't hired. I doubted my employability until a Federal agency committed to hiring people with disabilities gave me an opportunity to show what I can do. Did I experience discrimination? I don't know. Perhaps my skills did not match the other organizations' needs, or I truly was not qualified for a particular position. Employment discrimination is not obvious; it's very difficult to prove for that reason. Interviewers will always be courteous, and they will ask questions about the applicant and his or her work experiences, allowing time for elaboration. They may be nervous about someone with a disability, but any discomfort very likely won't show.

The potential employee must sell his or her talents along with the disability. This does not mean that one should capitalize on physical limitations; rather, shortcomings should be discussed positively. For example, because of having cerebral palsy, I cannot type rapidly or use an electric typewriter with ease. Direct me to a computer, however, and I become faster. Accuracy is a strong point because work does not often have to be returned to me for personal typing errors, and I proofread the work as I do it. These strengths were emphasized in interviews, but businesses are not interested in "slow but accurate" typists. My present position was slightly restructured to overcome the slow typing difficulty. I still type a wide variety of documents, but more proofreading and phone coverage are also emphasized.

Other jobseekers with disabilities should be encouraged to investigate job restructuring wherever possible. The interviewer might not be aware of this concept, so the individual must take the initiative to offer ways of using strengths and modifying the job. Assistive devices are also important, no matter how insignificant some may seem. If the job calls for photocopying, for instance, the applicant shouldn't merely say: I've used this type of copier before. If the applicant uses a wheelchair he or she should think of that "reacher", used at home regularly, as a tool that would help reach the copier's buttons. This task should be discussed in detail; if time permits during the interview, the applicant could offer a demonstration.

In terms of building and office accommodations, the applicant should assess his or her own needs first and talk them over with a vocational rehabilitation counselor or other contact. Contacting the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) toll-free at 1-900-JAN-PCEH about specific accommodation concerns is another way to be well informed and cooperative when faced with a potential employer's questions.

People with disabilities will continue to face barriers for a long time. Each individual should take the initiative to deal with any roadblocks. As assertiveness grows, true belief in personal abilities will come about, and others will be able to see capabilities.

***Carrie Smoot** is a staff member of President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.*

For People with Disabilities Getting to Work is Career Challenge

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by Linda G. Wilson

I want to talk about some of the reasons people with disabilities who want to work aren't working today. You've probably heard about problems with reasonable accommodation and attitudes of employers who are afraid to hire people with disabilities. These are real problems.

But these problems aren't what I want to highlight today. You need to know that part of the reason we aren't working is because housing is inaccessible, transportation is often unavailable, and we face heavy financial costs if we dare to work. I believe my situation is pretty typical of the problems faced by many people with disabilities.

I have muscular dystrophy. This disease causes me to lack the strength to walk or lift myself. I need help in bathing and dressing. For this reason, I need a personal care attendant to assist me at night and in the morning. I also had two children with muscular dystrophy. That meant three people in the family using wheelchairs.

When my children were growing up, I wanted them to attend regular public school instead of school for the handicapped. I wanted them to be able to interact with the "normal" kids. But we lived in a three-story walk-up, so my husband had to carry the kids down the stairs in the morning and be home when they got back from school. Even when my husband was able to get the kids downstairs, we had to get the school system to provide a lift-equipped bus so that they could get on the bus. That was a long struggle too.

We really needed an accessible home, a home without steps. But be couldn't keep his job and help the kids to get to and from school. So he quit his job so my kids could go to school. We had to go on Supplemental Security Income, the government benefit people with disabilities can get when they are not able to work.

My husband passed on, and I was faced with living on SSI or getting a job. I wanted my kids to know that they could work even though they were disabled. But when I tried to work, I found other reasons why disabled people aren't working.

My benefits were threatened. Specifically, my personal care attendant that was paid for by Medicaid was going to be removed since I was working. I don't make enough money to pay for a personal care attendant.

And my son needs 16 hours a day of nursing care because he has a trachea tube that allows him to breathe. The nurse has to be there to clean the tube and to make sure that it is not blocked with mucus. That nursing care was going to be removed because I was working. I don't make enough money to pay for 16 hours of nursing care either.

People at Social Security told me: "Linda, why don't you just stop working and live on Social Security? Why go through all this?" But I want to work. I want to be a taxpayer, not a welfare recipient. I am still fighting to keep the nursing care my son needs and the personal care attendant I need to work.

I ran into other barriers too. I depend on Metro (the Washington, D.C. area public transportation system) to get to work. But, where I live, I have to take a bus. I cannot get on a regular bus because of the steps. I have to have a lift-equipped bus.

You can only get a lift-equipped bus if you call 24 hours in advance. Metro then schedules a bus for your route. But twice a week, on average, the buses that come by have broken lifts. When this happens, mechanics have to be called or a new bus sent. It often takes me four hours a day just to get to and from work.

So, when you want to know why people who have disabilities have a hard time getting employment, remember that we face a lot of barriers you don't see. True, your car may break down, or your child-care person may get sick. But you usually have ways of dealing with those problems. As a person with a disability, our options are far fewer.

Events such as this one are important so that we remember that there are people with disabilities out there who are not working who want to work. But we must remember, too, that unless the problems of inaccessible housing and transportation are solved and we get rid of the financial disincentives, people with disabilities still won't be working in great numbers.

Linda G. Wilson *is a staff writer for the Federal Times.*

RECREATION AND LEISURE TIME

How people decide to use their leisure time can make a big difference in their ability to work. Many times persons with disabilities feel as if many recreational activities are not available to them. Care should be taken to make sure that each person with a disability experiences different leisure time activities. Hopefully, one or two of these will be adopted as a focus in order to integrate the persons with a disability into community activities.

Your local Independent Living Center can be very helpful in this area. Assistance can be provided to:

- identify classes or groups that are meeting in a particular interest area
- sponsor special groups such as a bowling team or card groups
- identify special activities for participation, e.g., Kite Day
- announce special running tournaments or Special Olympics activities in the community
- conduct special aerobic, exercise, or swimming classes for persons with disabilities
- identify hobby groups in the community such as Orchid Growers Club, Bird Watchers Club or many others that may be of interest
- locate special volunteer programs that contribute to specific community projects or activities

Each of us likes to feel like a valued members of a group. While Supported Employment creates a valuable work group for an individual, other forms of activity and group experience are needed and appropriate for persons with severe disabilities. Individual interests rather than type and severity of disabilities should be the deciding factor for participation. Involvement in leisure time activities should be a planned and expected part of everyone's life.

INFLUENCING EMPLOYERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

There are many things that you can do to influence the persons in your community concerning Supported Employment opportunities. For example, you can learn more about Supported Employment so that you are well-informed on the concept as well as the state policies implementing Supported Employment.

Whenever possible, you should ask questions of individuals working in the Supported Employment area about their perceptions of the program. This type of "networking" among Supported Employment service providers can be very important.

Become involved in boards and committees of organizations that you feel would benefit from incorporating Supported Employment programs. Discuss the benefits of integration in the larger community as an element of service delivery. Identify persons at you local community-based Supported Employment program who are familiar with ways in which you can advocate for Supported Employment, perhaps in collaboration with them.

Discuss Supported Employment opportunities available in your community with legislators. Because Supported Employment is a federally mandated program that is administered by state regulations, you can discuss alternatives with state legislators. A brief description of the "gaps" in the Supported Employment service system may be an effective way to approach these types of discussions.

You can volunteer your time and energy at your local Independent Living Center. You can suggest that you want to help with the Supported Employment or vocational areas of the program. This experience will bring you in contact with members of the community that can positively affect Supported Employment opportunities.

RESOURCES & REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

By Dr. Deborah S. Kearney

Not knowing "what to do" or "where to start" are the major barriers employers and employees with disabilities must overcome in order to allow for reasonable accommodation for job development and job maintenance. Three objectives must be met in order to design a satisfactory working environment:

1. a comprehensive understanding of the job and specific tasks involved,
2. a complete understanding of the applicant's disabilities, and
3. researching what necessary tools and/or adaptations will facilitate communication, planning and implementation of the modified work area.

In most instances, employers have either vague knowledge or misinformation of where to start, what to do and where to go to begin researching information for reasonable accommodation. Employees, on the other hand, know what is needed but sometimes are reluctant to ask.

More often than not this problem develops when communication lines are stressed by the lack of information concerning the capabilities of individuals with disabilities. To accommodate this unintentioned lack of sensitivity Work Stations, Inc., has developed a protocol which assesses the resource needs of qualified applicants. Using the reasonable accommodation checklist is Work Stations, Inc.'s, approach to maximizing the productivity and efficiency levels of individuals with disabilities in the workplace. The checklist is designed to organize and prioritize necessary materials, adaptations and designs. The value of our assessment tool is five-fold.

First, it increases the quality of communication between the employer and employee by focusing on capability while comfortably acknowledging and discussing disability.

Second, it increases the speed of job orientation by focusing from a job task perspective.

Third, it increases the natural integration or reintegration of employees by introducing all of the necessary accommodations prior to or at the very beginning of employment.

Fourth, it increases the employer's strategy options for recruitment of talented people.

Fifth, it increases the employer's ability to commit to valued employees who may become disabled.

The facilities management field agrees worker satisfaction occurs when the employees' environments ease possible communication barriers between fellow employees and employers. It therefore follows that productivity will increase when workers feel a certain satisfaction with their work environment. Job satisfaction is generally measured by a reduction in employee turnover and a lower level of absenteeism. Work Stations, Inc., has expanded the "good fit" and communication factors to include such disabling conditions as vision, hearing, mobility, grasp and reach, and speech limitations.

Work Stations, Inc. suggests you begin by evaluating the overall office layout. Optimal use would be to centralize all routine office functions (copiers, FAX machines, meeting areas, etc.) for all employees with or without disabilities. The layout should group individuals by their participation in similar job tasks. The design should also facilitate communication and group participation by creating pathways that not only save steps but increase whatever interaction may be necessary for job completion. Floor space should be planned to allow for privacy enclosures.

The higher the degree of privacy, the higher the degree of job performance. Privacy affords the employee an area for concentration and focused communication. Eye level (65 inches) panels on four sides is recommended. The individual office area, enclosed by panels, should be designed in a circular fashion with a working radius of five feet. This circular design has been proven to be advantageous for all workers. Linearly designed offices are not only tiresome, but also prove to be hazardous for people who have vision or mobility impairments.

When purchasing office furniture it is important to consider that most workers find adjustability, comfort, and adequate amount of work surfaces and accessible storage and filing cabinets most significant. Special attention to adjustability (height and tilt functions) should be given when work stations are designed for people with disabilities. Work surfaces should maximize eye-hand coordination for a range of tasks and minimize the need to fully extend for reach and grasp by using wrap around surfaces (circular designs). The five foot circular radius design minimizes steps to access materials and reduces the stress and fatigue factors which accompany every day work situations.

A well designed office environment must also include those factors which are most often overlooked initially and are not reviewed until there are concerns or complaints. These special areas of consideration are noise, lighting, temperature, and safety.

As much as possible, sound absorption panels should be used to eliminate noise pollution and enhance productivity in the office environment. Floors should be carpeted, drapes should be hung on all windows, partitions should be available, printers should be housed in sound proof covers. If noise pollution remains a problem then it is suggested that you add a white noise diversion machine to the area in question. Unlike noise, lighting is a personal consideration for each individual. There are, however, certain guidelines which must be maintained for all employees. In order to reduce the stress and fatigue which accompanies everyday eye strain it is important to follow these simple rules:

1. illumination should be high enough to allow the individual to do the required tasks of the job,
2. consideration should be given to the forms, symbols and objects used in the job,
3. the amount of reading necessary and the form the reading is in, handwriting versus books or blueprints,
4. the amount of time spent on computer terminals
5. the amount of time that the employee must spend working with objects near and far,
6. the individual's sensitivity to glare,
7. the narrowing visual field,
8. contrasts in colors.

The range of illumination recommended by the Illuminating Engineers Society for persons whose vision depends on good illumination is 60 to 140 foot-candles. Individual task lighting should be provided in order to furnish a higher level of illumination of specific areas. Whenever possible, most individuals will opt for natural illumination. Large windows not only contribute to natural lighting but they also provide a sense of openness and access to the outside environment. It is important, however, that all windows be fitted with shades or curtains in order to reduce glare and filter unwanted direct sunlight.

Individuals and their needs are unique in every aspect. One area for special consideration when designing a truly "usable by all" office is temperature control. There can be no "perfect temperature setting." To avoid any negative psychological effects it is essential to give employees using the office space as much control over its temperature as possible. If it is possible to zone the temperature for the comfort of the individual then do so. Designs must consider both tactile and thermal sensitivity. There should not be hot radiators for a person to run into or air that drafts or blows extremes of hot or cold air. The ability to impact on one's own comfort is an important psychological boost to anyone, disabled or not.

Last, but certainly not least is safety. It should be the designer's concern as well as the concern of the people using the office. Keep in mind that a concerted effort to design a safe office environment tends to be more important when people with physical disabilities and fully ambulatory people are working together. Also, remember that people cause accidents, not objects. Many accidents in an office occur while a person is in motion (slipping, falling, tripping) and most office injuries involve either the hands or fingers.

All Office Injuries Can be Prevented

Some rules to consider when designing a safe office are listed below:

1. electrical equipment must be grounded,
2. all safe operations manuals for electrical equipment must be read carefully and completely and adhered to,
3. no long extension cords should be stretched over the floor,
4. heavy equipment or furniture must be properly secured,
5. protective guards must be supplied (and used) on all equipment when necessary,

6. emergency safety instructions must be posted and clearly visible to all employees,
7. basic safety principles must be followed at all times,
8. safety equipment and emergency kits must be provided and located in areas that prove easily accessible for all,
9. harmful noise should be eliminated as much as possible,
10. hazardous materials must be contained in approved areas and/or eliminated,
11. all repairs to unsafe conditions should be taken care of immediately: loose tiles, rugs, broken window panes, burned out light bulbs, frayed electrical cords,
12. all corridors, stairways, doorways, etc., should be clearly marked,
13. employees should be counseled on the importance of using handrails and caution when traveling about the office building space,
14. safe smoking areas and practices should be provided and implemented.

Safety is Thinking First and Using Common Sense

Resources and reasonable accommodation work best when the employer and employee work together to make the work space as functional and comfortable as possible. Incremental changes can be made without total re-design and/or major investments. Work Stations, Inc., works with each end user on an individual basis to help them design work environments that are effectively productive for all involved: an environment which contributes to the comfort, safety and self-esteem of the employee.

Employers must take the time to tour the office facility with the person with the disabilities and discuss the elements the employee feels should be modified or changed in order for her/him to accomplish the goal of competently doing the required job.

There are specific guidelines pertaining to office dimensions, furniture and work surface arrangement (height, width, depth, length, etc.) when designing for the worker with a disability. These guidelines and specific suggestions are discussed in a Work Station, Inc. publication, "High Performance from People with Potential," a barrier free design guide. This guide may be ordered directly from Work Station, Inc., 165 Front Street, Door D., Chicopee, MA 01013. Telephone: (413) 598-8394.

The question, *how should we accommodate your needs in the following areas in order for you to be more productive on the job*, should be asked and the checklist on the next page used in the evaluation process.

Dr. Deborah S. Kearney *is president of Work Stations, Inc.*

The Employer's Checklist

Dr. Deborah S. Kearney, Work Stations, Inc.

	Essential to Provide	Manageable	No Accommodation Needed
Accessibility parking			
Ramps			
Platforms			
Doors			
Corridors			
Elevators			
Controls			
Bathrooms			
Grab bars			
Sink access			
Stall access			
Turning radius			
Furniture			
Desk			
Chair			
Bookcases			
Cabinets			
Filing			
Storage			
Equipment			
General Appearance			
Noise			
Lighting			
General			
Specific			
Temperature			
Privacy			

Creating Winning Environments: The Nuts and Bolts of Reasonable Accommodation

by Darcy S. Painter and Lee S. Gardner

If you are an employer who has seriously considered the possibility that workers with disabilities can contribute to the success of your business, or if you are mandated by corporate or federal Policy to make such considerations, then you will soon be faced with the issue of reasonable accommodation.

We relate here one experience in hiring, placing and nurturing a winning employment environment. It includes information about making federal systems work for people, but the processes also apply to any business where money is scarce and fiscal accountability is essential.

In April of 1989, members of the Handicapped Individuals Program (HIP) Advisory Committee at Edwards Air Force Base in Southern California successfully matched an applicant's qualifications with a manager's requirements. That's not noteworthy except that we had failed in many prior attempts to place candidates with significant sensory disabilities in higher occupations like math, engineering and science.

Prior to this success we had not been able to overcome a manager's fear of double jeopardy: hiring an employee who fails at the job, and then being judged as a poor manager as a result of the failure of the employee selected. This time we had a manager willing to take a risk, and he had been convinced that this applicant's disability could be accommodated through technology. We had done the convincing and now had to follow through successfully.

In the process of struggling with the realities of the job accommodation, some successful strategies emerged. We found that a whole-person approach to reasonable accommodation that reaches beyond the job, and considers both home and work is most likely to succeed.

Step 1: Define the Requirements

When deluged by products that seem identical, when in doubt, when overwhelmed, list the required job duties. This process is logical, reasonable, and actually helps clear confusion. From these duties, and their daily completion, come the requirements for all equipment, software, and other accommodations that make the daily routine smooth and efficient, and, in the case of a sight-impaired candidate, possible.

Extracting requirements from a list of duties or a position description may taken intense effort. Questions beginning with the words "what" and "how" will reveal the specific requirements. Involve the new employee and the supervisor in the process. Their insight is a valued tool.

Begin with *What*. Explore what must be done, concentrating on the products of a day's work: the reports, memos, documents, charts, etc., that are the results of doing the job.

Move on to *How*. Look for the methodologies, procedures, standards, regulations, etc. that form the products discovered in the "What" phase. Pay specific attention to computer equipment to be used and the software that runs on that equipment. A common mistake is to assume that the current, or prescribed methodology is the only way to produce the desired product. Keep an open mind for alternative solutions; be critical of procedures, especially those that use some favorite piece of equipment or software. Seek justification when in doubt; ask specific *Why?* questions to determine how acceptable alternative solutions might be.

In our example situation, the supervisor suggested a particular CASE (Computer Aided Software Engineering) system. In discussion, it became clear that the products (flowcharts, data flow diagrams, system descriptions, etc.) were the important items. The CASE system happens to provide them in a compact, easily manipulated graphical form. The feature the supervisor valued was not an advantage to a visually impaired employee. Therefore, the use of that software was not a requirement.

At this point daily activities and useful tools can be defined, and the requirements for success in the particular job can be determined. This task may take hours, sometimes days, maybe weeks. Persistence pays off. The goal is to get to the requirements behind general job duties and obscure job products which lead to task completion. The illumination you seek lights not only your path, but may also enlighten the supervisor-employee relationship.

Step 2:
Fulfill the Requirements as Simply as Possible

Armed with the requirements for hardware and software to facilitate the new employee's work, move on to that mountain of literature about adaptive equipment. Sort through the products, discard those that fail on one or more requirements. From the remaining stack, select the best three or four (based on price, usually) that satisfy your needs.

With the field of products narrowed, determine the subtle differences between products. For instance, we were confronted with two, seemingly identical Braille printers (embossers). One was rated at 40 cps (characters per second), the other at 50 cps and costing $300 more. What wasn't written in those specifications were noise levels. One machine (the more expensive one) is three times quieter than the other (Braille embossers are notoriously loud machines). So, in addition to gaining 10 cps in speed, the more expensive unit was quieter. That combination of features was worth the extra cost.

Consider maintenance costs. Try to gather reliability data from current owners of the products you are considering and take advantage of their experience with the product. If an item has an average of 1,000 hours between failures, but must be replaced when a failure occurs, that may not be as economically advantageous as an item that fails twice as often, but costs an average of 15% of product price for repairs. (If you can get it repaired in a timely fashion.)

If you can convince vendors to let you try out products in the work environment, set up experiments that stress the system more than you intend to during normal use. Try to cover all operational scenarios in your tests. Observe and analyze the results carefully, then make your selection based on the results of your tests.

Once you have gathered the best information you can about product reliability, performance, maintainability, and usefulness, make an information decision. You are not in a position to justify your choices to management (if necessary) and finish the required paperwork that will start the acquisition process.

Step 3:
Go An Extra Mile

Now that choices have been made, funds committed, and orders placed, don't quit. Your new employee still needs support and help. You've concentrated on the work environment, now consider the new employee's home environment.

Even the most independent of people may have difficulty finding a place to live near their job, securing support services necessary to maintain their independence, and feeling comfortable in their new homes and social settings. Consider offering assistance to find accessible, affordable housing. Maintain a list of reputable service providers in your area. Be aware of sources of personal attendants and assistants which might be available through local colleges, hospitals, and community service groups. Develop a network of support sources and share the information with new employees. Be a good representative of your employer and your community. A few hours of time introducing a newcomer to the stores, post office, churches, etc., will break the ice and encourage a smooth transition to the new area.

Transportation is a huge barrier to successful employment of people with disabilities. If your local area hasn't begun to offer accessible transportation, begin lobbying for it. Determine what barriers are preventing equal opportunity to transportation and start working on the problems. In the interim (this may be years, by the way) find a solution for this new employee, and then find a back-up solution. Redundancy is the byword of successful support systems.

Final Step: Look at the Whole Picture

At the point where you match a candidate's abilities with a job's requirements, you have a decision to make. If you expect a successful placement realize that significant resources must be committed, especially time. Make a commitment to see the placement through the requirements gathering, the equipment selection and acquisition, the relocation, and through the problems and confusion.

Be an advocate, an information resource, and a friend. Become an expert in requirement extraction, product testing, and informed decision making.

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SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT COMMITTEE

The activities of job development and job placement will be facilitated by involving members of your local employer community in the process. Employers are tied in to networks and possess relationships that far outweigh what Employment Advocates or Job Developers can do on their own.

The development of a group of employers that meet regularly to focus on problems in placement of Supported Employment individuals can be helpful. The employers can potentially help by:

- calling someone to "open the door" to a certain business
- using personal contacts to determine what real employment opportunities may exist within a company
- serving as an "interviewer" for persons in Supported Employment to help them "hone" their interview skills, if appropriate
- assisting in determining the jobs in the community that have the best chances of continuing
- identifying the special types of skills and abilities that may be associated with a particular job or employer in order to orient the Employment Advocate to needs that may not be readily apparent
- playing an active role in attempting to find a placement for an individual that is in the Supported Employment program
- making presentation(s) to consumers about what is expected of employees in the world of work
- serving as advocates for consumers who have particular needs that the community or particular employers need to address

These are just a few examples of ways in which Placement Committees, Business Advisory Councils and other groups of employers can be helpful in the job development and placement area. Many times these individuals are willing to donate their time and energy when their purpose is focused and recognition of their efforts is provided.

IF YOUR CHILD IS STILL IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

If your child is classified as being a special education student in the public school system, there may be additional resources and services available for your child. If your child is not 22 years of age and has not been graduated from the public school system, the schools have a legal responsibility to provide training and services to meet educational and, perhaps, vocational needs demonstrated by your child.

Some states are now requiring the development of an Individual Transition Plan that identifies the goals and activities that will be pursued by the education system and other participating state agencies -- such as the state vocational rehabilitation agency -- in order to facilitate transition to the community after schooling has been completed. Such planning can be important and can be incorporated into many Individual Education Plans that are developed for students in special education.

Many Supported Employment programs will not want to involve a student that is actively going to school and taking in program activities. This is the case for many reasons:

- the student has not completed basic requirements (e.g., a high school diploma) that will make a big difference in the types of jobs that he or she will qualify for
- students' schedules may not be conducive to planned classes at the Independent Living Center or special needs of an employer
- because Supported Employment is a stable work situation, it is not to be treated as "summer work" for students
- the experience level of many students is not sufficient to allow them to direct their own job searches

Alternative programs that may be available should be discussed with the school Vocational Adjustment Counselor or others to determine the types of opportunities that do exist. Some research has shown that individuals that engage in summer employment tend to do better in employment situations after graduation from public school. In general, if your son or daughter is in special education in the high school grades, you can:

- participate in scheduled admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meetings and insist that your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) address employment training and the transition from school to work
- request that vocational training be performed in actual work settings rather than in the classroom or school setting
- remind and demonstrate to your child the importance of work
- demonstrate and encourage your child to dress appropriately for work
- contact your child's teacher and vocational instructor to determine if there are special types of reinforcements that you can offer in the home setting
- either through a school scheduled event or your own initiation, schedule a meeting with your local vocational rehabilitation counselor to discuss the needs of your child and what the agency can do

CONSUMER RIGHTS

The rights you have as a consumer in an Independent Living Center are:

- to be treated with respect and dignity
- to receive assistance through services offered within the Independent Living Center
- to have your privacy ensured. Your name and records and other information will be kept private (confidential). You must give permission in writing before information about you will be given to anyone else
- to file a grievance in accordance with specified policies and procedures
- to assist in the development of an Independent Living Plan designed to identify needs and appropriate services. There is a place for you to sign your name and the date to indicate that you understand and agree to all goals and objectives listed on this plan. You have the right to sign this plan if it is satisfactory to you. You have the right to know about and agree to any changes in your service plan. You have the right to receive a copy of this plan and know the names of each professional staff person who will be working with you
- to attend and participate in Job Club activities
- to participate in job development
- to explore and select from identified employment options
- to select the type of employment that you are interested in and qualified for
- to accept the job offered to you, or to decide to seek another supported employment position

The rights you have during employment are:

- to be treated with respect and dignity
- to receive fair wages for the work you perform
- to receive any and all benefits allowed by the company for the position in which you are working
- to receive promotions for which you may qualify
- to file a grievance in accordance with company policies and procedures
- to not be discriminated against because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status, or the presence of a non-job-related medical condition or disability
- to have access to, without difficulty when entering or exiting, the following designated areas: your work area, break rooms, and restrooms

Guiding Principles for Supported Employment Programs

(From: New Mexico Supported Employment Planning Project Newsletter, September 1989)

1) People with disabilities are entitled to full participation in all aspects of life within their community.

Persons experiencing disabilities have the same legal and human rights as all other persons. They are full members of society and have the right to fully participate in community life. This participation includes, but is not limited to:

- attending civic meetings
- eating in restaurants
- purchasing a home
- using public transportation
- attending church/synagogue of choice
- joining clubs and organizations
- using community health facilities
- using recreational facilities
- community employment
- living where they choose
- shopping
- voting

All supported employment programs must enhance the value that individuals with disabilities are entitled to full community participation.

2) Integrated employment allows persons with disabilities tocontinue to develop to their fullest potential.

Supported employment programs help individuals with disabilities by giving them opportunities to develop new skills, especially social skills and specific work competencies. Employment provides a natural motivation for learning new skills and developing one's potential.

3) Integrated employment assists individuals in becoming contributing members of their communities.

Too often society does not view people with disabilities as contributors to society's commonwealth. Supported employment assists persons with disabilities with an opportunity to contribute to their society. Contributions focus on the product or service the person produces. Secondary contributions include taxes paid, goods purchased, relationships established and service to others.

Supported Employment programs reassert that people with disabilities can enhance the quality of community life via their contributions.

4) People with severe disabilities are capable of being integrated into local work settings.

Most community employment opportunities can meet the employment needs of persons with severe disabilities. Most jobs can be adapted or modified to allow the person with a disability to be a successful, productive employee. The role of the supported employment program must be to identify and provide the right level of assistance to ensure that the community employment situation will be successful for the worker as well as the supervisor.

5) Valued work provides opportunities for building respect, dignity, and self-esteem.

People with disabilities must be afforded opportunities to perform valued work for their communities. Through work one not only develops skills and new relationships, but more importantly develops self-esteem. As co-workers and the general public witness the completion of valued work, the dignity and respect given to the individual will greatly increase.

6) Persons with disabilities should be afforded opportunities to make choices in pursuit of a personal future.

All persons should have choices in regard to their lives. Supported employment programs must provide choices in terms of career, types of jobs within career areas, hours of employment and how wages are spent. Naturally, choices are often influenced by the necessities of life; however, within that reality persons with disabilities must be given choices as to how they want to work, where and under what conditions.

7) Persons with disabilities must be paid a fair wage for work completed.

It is illegal to have persons with disabilities perform work without paying them. Unfortunately, many people with disabilities perform work for subminimum wages. Supported employment programs must strive to secure employment which will pay at or above minimum wage. It is impossible to realize the outcomes of supported employment if the individual does not make the necessary wages to enjoy an improved quality of life. Volunteer or charity work is not acceptable for supported employment programs.

8) Employment specialists, employers and co-workers are powerful allies in facilitating the entry of people with disabilities into valued roles in society.

Persons developing and implementing supported employment programs have a unique role in assisting people with disabilities. Likewise, employers and co-workers are instrumental in facilitating people with disabilities to become full, contributing members of society. Supported employment programs must recognize the unique role these individuals play and must actively support them.

9) Family members must be actively involved in the supported employment process.

Family members should be encouraged to become team participants in the delivery of supported employment programs. Family members can help ensure that developed programs truly meet the needs of the individual. Family members should also be encouraged to evaluate supported employment programs and meet regularly with service providers.

10) Employment is only one part of the range of experiences and relationships that contribute to an individual's happiness and success.

While work is a critical aspect of most lives, other aspects of life are equally, if not more important. Certainly someone's family and friends are paramount to one's work. Home life, recreation, spiritual endeavors and hobbies greatly contribute to a person's sense of self and quality of life. Supported employment programs must recognize and foster the value of experiences other than employment for persons experiencing disabilities.

11) No person should be denied access to supported employment simply because of the severity of their disability.

Supported employment was initially designed for those individuals who were denied access to traditional vocational programs. If support is flexible and intense, most people can benefit from supported employment opportunities.

12) The value of supported employment programs should be judged in terms of the outcomes provided to persons with disabilities.

The bottom line for all supported employment programs is the quality of life experienced by the individual with a disability. Supported employment must lead to tangible outcomes which improve the quality of life.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Break Even Point	A Social Security term that refers to the level at which the SSI recipient is earning enough money so that he or she is no longer eligible to receive any 1619 (a) payments. The break even point is determined by a formula based on an individual's current SSI payment, amount of unearned income and earned wages.
Community-Based Jobs	Employment opportunities in the community that provide work in a job setting with non-disabled persons.
Competitive Employment	Regular part/full time jobs in the community which are typically filled by non-disabled persons who are paid at least minimum wage.
Consumer	An individual with a disability who is seeking to increase his/her level of personal independence.
Contract	The formal (legally-binding) agreement over wages, hours and conditions of employment entered into between an employer or group of employers and one or more unions representing employees of the employers. Covers a particular period of time (also union-management agreement, collective bargaining agreement, labor contract).
Earned Income	A Social Security term that refers to the money a person with a disability earns by performing work.

Employment Advocate/ Trainer	A professional or paraprofessional person whose function is to place, train and maintain a person with a severe disability in an integrated community work environment.
Extended Period of Eligibility	You have special protection for at least 36 months after the trial work period. During this period, Social Security benefits can be paid for each month in which you are disabled and do not perform any substantial gainful activity. You must tell Social Security about these months, but you do not have to file a new application.
Fading	A supported employment training technique used to detach the consumer from dependency on the Employment Advocate. This gradual process begins by increasing the physical distance between the Employment Advocate and the consumer.
Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE)	A term that is related to the break even point formula for Social Security. Certain impairment-related work expenses paid by the employee can be deducted from earnings prior to reducing one's Social Security benefits. Social Security must approve each deduction. Check with your local Social Security Office for examples of items and services that may qualify.
Independent Living Center (ILC)	An agency to which a consumer may apply to receive assistance in increasing the level of personal independence and control in his/her life. Centers typically address need areas such as housing, advocacy, peer counseling, independent living skills training, community resource services, employment services, mobility training, attendant services, information and referral, and others.

Independent Living Plan (ILP)	A plan tailored to identify individual needs of the consumer. The ILP contains goals and objectives with designated responsibilities and timelines to be pursued by the consumer with the assistance of ILC staff and others.
Integration	That characteristic of the work environment in which a person with a disability has opportunity for employment and social contacts with persons without disabilities who are not paid care providers.
Job Club	Job Club is a class with activities that provide information about community job opportunities. Discussion and activities may assist individuals in making an informed choice about employment options and may result in better job matches. Job Club has four components: • Job Awareness • Work Appropriate Skills • Company Policies and Procedures • Job Maintenance Skills
Job Related Skills	Skills such as learning to use public transportation, making or buying a lunch, developing and maintaining appropriate grooming habits, using vending machines, or depositing a paycheck in the bank. These skills are considered to be job-related in that they affect a person's ability to obtain or maintain a job but are not necessarily related to the performance of a specific job task.
Memorandum of Understanding	An agreement between union and management that is attached to the contract but is not part of it. A memorandum of understanding can cover conditions of employment for supported employees. A memorandum does not require a vote of

the union's governing council. A memorandum usually must be rewritten from contract period to contract period.

Minimum Wage	The minimum, set by federal law, that a worker can be paid per hour. States may increase the minimum wage for their own workers.
On-the-job Training	An element of supported employment activities involving direct employee instruction by an Employment Advocate in completing job tasks and acquiring job-related skills. This instruction takes place on an actual worksite in the community, utilizes behavioral training techniques, and is structured as follows: • Job orientation • Assessment of skills • Initial training/skills acquisition • Skills maintenance • Fading The Employment Advocate who provides on-the-job training is an Independent Living Center employee. The consumer is hired as an employee of the local company.
Organized Labor	A term applied to labor unions collectively.
Plan to Achieve Self-Support	PASS is an SSI work incentive in which persons with disabilities can set aside income and/or resources to be used to achieve a specific work goal. A PASS can be established for education, vocational training, starting a business, and purchasing support services which enable a person to work.

Right to Work	A term used to describe laws which ban union-security agreements (a union shop) by forbidding contracts making employment conditional on membership or nonmembership in labor organizations. As of November 1989, 21 states with right-to-work laws were Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wyoming.
Subminimum Wage	An amount less than the legislated minimum wage.
Work Incentives	**1619(a)** A section of the Social Security Law that was permanently changed in 1987. This statutory section allows a person receiving SSI to continue to receive monthly income support checks even though earnings are greater than $300 per month. Under Section 1619 (a), a person who has received a SSI payment may continue to receive it indefinitely depending upon the amount of earnings. Under this special program, some cash benefits are continued as an incentive to work until the benefits reach a break even point. **1619(b)** A section of the Social Security law that provides continued health assistance for persons with a continuing disability who lose their SSI because earnings exceeded the break even point.

Formerly, loss of SSI cash benefits resulted in loss of Medicaid health assistance and thus further discouraged disabled persons from working. Medicaid coverage is now discontinued only if the worker's income or work benefits would allow the purchase of equivalent health insurance or would permit the worker to participate in a company's health insurance plan.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Family Resources

Beach Center on Families and Disability
2045 Haworth Hall
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS 66045
(913) 864 - 4295

Parents' Education Advocacy Center
228 South Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836 - 2953

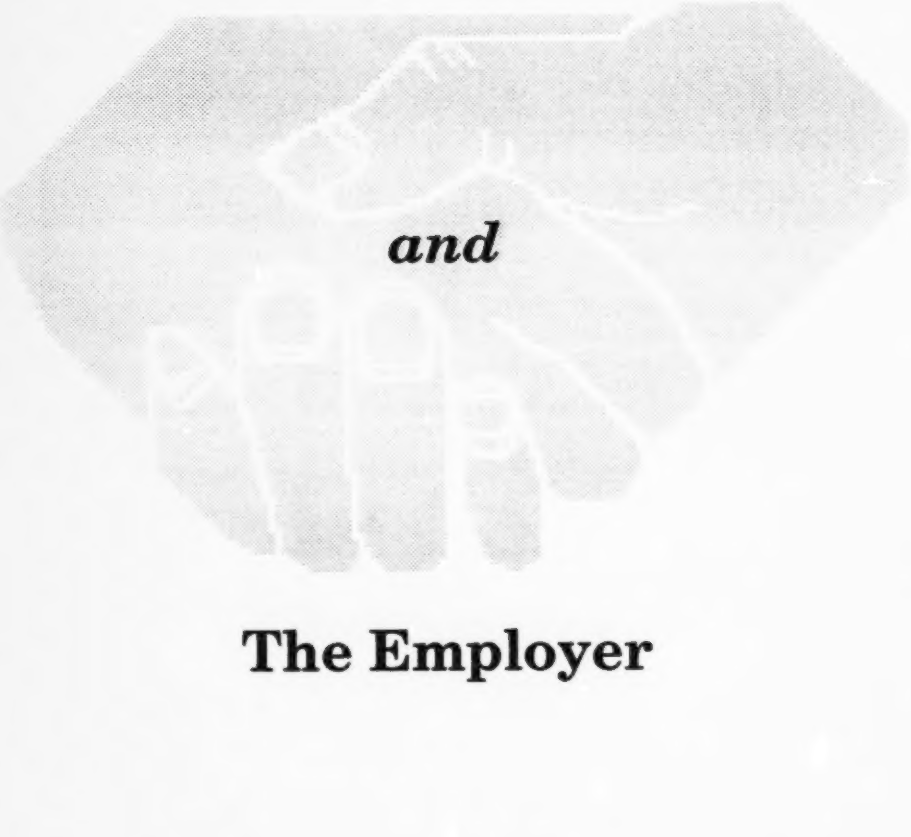
Supported Employment Parent Training
Technical Assistance
PACER Center, Inc.
4826 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55417
(612) 827 - 2966

Attachment III

Supported Employment and the Employer

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
AND YOUR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER:
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Supported Employment



and

The Employer

National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This material has been developed for use by staff of a community based independent living center. Information can be used in a variety of ways – independently by consumers or in portions as a part of a special employer presentation or training activity. These materials may be available on disk in a word processed format to allow you to "personalize" the information for your center and consumers. Braille and audio versions are available upon request.

National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
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Austin, Texas 78701-3281
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The contents of this publication were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, Department of Education, Cooperative Agreement #H133D80001. These contents however, do not necessarily represent the policy of that agency, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government. In compliance with appropriate state and federal laws and regulations, all programs administered by and all services provided by the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status, or the presence of a non-job-related medical condition or handicap. This publication of the National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living project is made possible through a cooperative agreement of $175,000.00 from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) of the U. S. Department of Education. This project is funded 100% through federal funds.

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What's Different About Supported Employment?

Supported Employment provides real work for people with disabilities. It is new a type of program that trains people with disabilities to do the job at the worksite instead of attempting to provide training in sites where the environment and materials are much different than they are on the real job.

The person that provides this onsite training is called an Employment Advocate. He or she comes to your organization and learns/performs the job BEFORE attempting to train the person with a disability. In this way, the Employment Advocate can address the specific requirements of your job and can determine the best way to approach the training.

After training is complete, the Employment Advocate will come back periodically to monitor the employee. The Employment Advocate is available to help in any way that may be needed.

Hopefully, you will be able to provide a job for a person with a disability. Supported Employment makes it easier for you, and the program is designed to meet your production/service needs.

How Can Supported Employment Help The Employer?

You benefit from Supported Employment by obtaining:

- Free Staffing Services - Employment Advocate staff will pre-screen potential employees to make sure the worker's abilities match your job requirements.

- Competent, motivated workers - People selected for Supported Employment positions in your company indicate an interest in the work and a desire to work with your company. Employment Advocates will not bring an individual to your company simply because a job is open – the person wants to work at your company.

- Free onsite job training - A professional Employment Advocate will provide on-the-job training for the employee. This is done until the person knows and can perform the job over time.

- Free follow-up services - The Employment Advocate will continue to make follow-up visits to make sure that the employee continues to perform the job at a satisfactory level. The Employment Advocate can also help you if changes to the original job are necessary.

- Work Assurance - If you choose to hire a supported employment candidate, you will have our assurance that the job will be performed according to your specifications.

Supported Employment Can Be Cost-Effective

Supported Employment can be cost-effective for your company by:

$ reducing your employee turnover and absenteeism rates

$ providing training and supervision at no cost to you

$ offering dependable, motivated workers

$ identifying federal and state tax incentives, e.g., tax credits of up to $2,400 for each supported employee in the first year of employment

$ not increasing per-employee costs for any of your current employee benefits such as insurance or workers' compensation

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How Can I Help?

You can help by:

- providing a job for a person in the Supported Employment program
- joining an Employer Advisory Council and providing guidance to Employment Advocates as they go about trying to find jobs that persons with disabilities want
- offering a tour of your company so workers with disabilities who are not familiar with your company can learn and, perhaps, become interested in the work
- using your influence with other employers to "open a door" for a worker with a disability so that he/she can find a meaningful job
- encouraging people with disabilities whom you know to contact their local Independent Living Center to see if they can join a Supported Employment program

What Do Other Employers Say About Supported Employment?

"At McDonald's we believe that the only thing that can truly disable a person is loss of opportunity. And there is nothing more disabling to a person than to be told, 'You can't do it'. McDonald's disabled workers have proven themselves to be exceptionally hard workers. They are dedicated, loyal employees with low absentee and turnover rates."

McDonald's Corporation

"The program has proven to be mutually beneficial for the beer distributor as well as the workers...within one week (the disabled workers) far exceeded our expectation. They are more an asset to our company than a service and it's rewarding." *Adolph Coors Company*

Following are a few of the companies that have hired workers with disabilities and are included in *Disabled Americans At Work*, a publication of The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities:

Dow Chemical
Pennsylvania Power and Light Company
Stauffer Chemical Company
Montana Power Company
W.R. Grace & Co.
Texaco
GTE
Duke Power Company
AT&T
Edison Electric Institute

ITT
Aetna Life and Casualty
New England Telephone
Allstate
Honeywell
American Express
Sperry
Blue Cross, Blue Shield
Philip Morris
The Prudential Insurance Company
Miller Brewing Company
Pfizer Incorporated
Eastman Kodak Company
Abbott Laboratories
Continental Grain
Merck & Co.
Motion Designs
Hospital Corporation of America
Proctor & Gamble
Westinghouse
United Airlines
Rockwell International
General Mills
General Dynamics
Washington Water Power
General Motors Corporation
Baltimore Gas and Electric
Marriott Corporation

Addressing the Misconceptions

Employers find that employees with disabilities do well on the job. A Harris Poll of more than 900 managers found that workers with disabilities were "good" (64%) or "excellent" (24%). About 46% of the managers rate persons with disabilities as harder workers than their peers with no disabilities and 33% rate them about the same as their non-disabled co-workers. *Harris Poll*

Safety

Some employers believe that people with disabilities are more accident prone than non-disabled workers. In fact, the opposite is true. Many employers have found that workers with disabilities have much better safety records than others.

For example, a major company in the communications industry surveyed a plant with a high proportion of employees with disabilities and found that the plant had achieved an all-time safety record with no lost-time injuries. Further, no worker with a disability had suffered more than a minor on-the-job injury since beginning employment with the company.

A large chemical company surveyed more than 1,400 of its employees with disabilities and found:

- No increases in workers' compensation costs or lost-time injuries
- 96% of the workers with disabilities rated average or above in job safety, and more than half rated above average

Workers' Compensation

Employers are often afraid that hiring individuals with disabilities will raise their workers' compensation expenses. This is not the case Workers' compensation rates are determined by the nature of the business, size of the payroll and individual employer experience, not by how many employees with disabilities are on the payroll.

All states have second injury funds, which are financed by insurance carriers and self-insured employers in each state, to relieve an employer of liability for pre-existing disabilities. The second injury funds generally pay the difference between the employer's responsibility for a new injury and the total benefits payable to the worker with a disability.

WAGE AND HOUR REGULATIONS

Minimum Wage

The minimum wage is increasing. The following demonstrates the new hourly minimum wage amounts and the point in time they become effective.

Date Effective	Minimum Wage	Increase from last Minimum Wage
April 1, 1990	$3.80/hour	.45/hour
April 1, 1991	$4.25/hour	.45/hour

Training Wage

Special provisions now exist for the payment of a training wage for teen-agers. The new training wage applies to workers between the ages of 16 and 19. Beginning April 1, 1990 employers would be allowed to pay workers in this age category $3.35 per hour for a cumulative period of 90 days per individual. After 90 days, the worker would be entitled to the full minimum wage.

Subminimum Wage

Through a special state and federal waiver process, an employer may pay subminimum wages. Prior written approval from the Department of Labor is necessary before such wages can be paid.

Labor Unions and Supported Employment

Approximately 17 percent of the American workforce are represented by labor unions. In analyzing the relationship between supported employment and labor unions, the Washington Supported Employment Initiative (1990) in cooperation with the Service Employers International Union identified the following as potential barriers in attaining supported employment placements in unionized organizations:

"

- lack of knowledge about supported employment by the union
- the presence of support personnel
- the need for job restructuring or modifying minimum qualifications
- subminimum wage payments
- productivity assessments
- group supported employment
- access to union membership " (p.3)

These potential barriers should become the focus of specific activities that will be conducted with labor unions.

Employment Advocate

The role of the Employment Advocate in considering a supported employment placement in an ** organization becomes one of relationship building. Obtain a copy of the union-management contract to learn details of working relationship between labor and management. Ask the union representative to explain the main terms of the contract to you.

Working People: Supported Employment and Labor Unions (1990) indicates the importance of taking into account the following considerations:

- Get the union involved early. Go to the union's elected top leadership.
- Don't assume that the union will be opposed to supported employment.
- Learn about the company and the union.
- Obtain a copy of the union-management bargaining agreement as soon as feasible and note or highlight all the items that you believe may be of concern with supported employment.
- Explain what supported employment is and what it is not to management and the union.
- Respect the "integrity of the bargaining unit." Be careful not to seek accommodations that could be construed as threats to other workers' hours, wages or benefits.
- Inform union leadership - and stick to it in practice - that the job coach trains and supports the person with disability and does not DO the job.
- Advocate for creating new job classifications and new entry qualifications to accommodate the supported employee.
- Expect the union to insist on at least the minimum wage in a union shop.

- Take care in conducting productivity assessments so that they are fair and aren't applied to other workers.
- Expect workers in unionized supported employment jobs to join the union. In some situations it will be required; in others it will help promote the supported employee's integration into the workplace.
- Expect union and management to write a memorandum of understanding or an addendum to the bargaining agreement to cover supported employment.
- Keep everybody informed - top management and labor officials and fellow employees.

References

Working People, Supported Employment and Labor Unions, A project of Service Employees International Union, Local 6, and Washington Supported Employment Initiative; Seattle, Washington.

Governor's Commission on Employment of Persons with Disabilities.

President's Commission on Employment of Persons with Disabilities.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Don't most employers regret getting into this type of Supported Employment program?

On the contrary, most employers find that it helps them achieve their work targets. To prove the point, Virginia Commonwealth University studied Supported Employment and Employer's satisfaction and found:

- Over 75% of the employers were satisfied with the work performance of their workers' with disabilities
- 87% of the employers said that they would use Supported Employment services again
- 67% of the employers reported lower turnover among their employees who were disabled
- 64% of the employers said that the follow-up services (provided as long as the person is in the job) influenced their decision to hire a person with a disability

Won't my insurance rates go up if I hire a person with a disability?

No. Rates for insurance and other benefits are calculated based upon the degree to which a particular workforce utilizes the benefit. Employees with disabilities do not use benefits at a higher rate than other employees; therefore, they do not affect insurance, workers' compensation, or other benefit premiums that may be offered to employees.

What if other employees don't like it if I hire someone with a disability?

Each group of employees is different, but generally every workforce realizes that people with disabilities deserve the same chance to work that they have. Supported Employment is a method by which people with disabilities can more easily join your workforce and perform work that you consider valuable. Almost all co-workers will agree that hiring people with disabilities enhances rather than detracts from the general workforce.

Attachment IV

1986 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI, Part C: Supported Employment for Individuals with Severe Handicaps

1986 AMMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

TITLE VI -- EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH HANDICAPS

PART C -- SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SEVERE HANDICAPS

PURPOSE

SEC. 631. It is the purpose of this part to authorize grants (supplementary to grants for vocational rehabilitation services under title I) to assist States in developing collaborative programs with appropriate public agencies and private nonprofit employment services leading to supported employment for individuals with severe handicaps.

ELIGIBILITY

SEC. 632. Services may be provided under this part to any individuals with severe handicaps whose ability or potential to engage in a training program and whose ability to engage in a supported employment setting has been determined by an evaluation of rehabilitation potential as defined in section 7 of this Act.

ALLOTMENTS

SEC. 633. (a) (1) The Secretary shall allot the sums appropriated for each fiscal year under this section among the States on the basis of relative population of each State, except that no State shall receive less than $250,000 or one-third of 1 percent of the sums made available for the fiscal year for which the allotment is made, whichever is greater.

(2) (A) For the purposes of this subsection, the term "States" does not include Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(B) The jurisdictions described in subparagraph (A) shall be allotted not less than one-eighth of 1 percent of the amounts made available for purposes of this subpart for each such clause for the fiscal year for which the allotment is made.

(b) Whenever the commissioner determines that any amount of an allotment to a State for any fiscal year will not be expended by such State to carry out the provisions of this part, the Commissioner shall make such amount available for carrying out the provisions of this part to one or more of the States which the Commissioner determines will be able to use additional amounts during such year for carrying out such provisions. Any amount made available to a State for any fiscal year pursuant to the preceding sentence shall, for the purposes of this section, be regarded as an increase in the State's allotment for such year.

(c) (1) In the first fiscal year in which appropriations are made pursuant to section 638 a State may, in lieu of receiving its allotment under this part, make an application for a planning grant for that fiscal year. The secretary is authorized to approve the appropriation of States which meet the requirements of this subsection.

(2) (A) The grant made under this subsection shall be used for planning activities designed to facilitate the State using its allotment under this part.

(B) No grant under this subsection may exceed a period of 18 months.

(3) No planning grant made under this subsection my exceed $250,000.

STATE PLAN

SEC. 634. (a) In order to be eligible for grants under this part, a State shall submit to the Commissioner as part of the State plan under title I of this Act a State plan supplement for a three-year period for providing training and traditionally time-limited post-employment services leading to supported employment for individuals with severe handicaps. Each State shall make such annual revisions in the plan supplement as may be necessary.

(b) Each such plan supplement shall--

(1) designated each agency of such State designated under section 101 (a) (2) (B) of this Act as the agency to administer the program assisted under this part;

(2) (A) specify results of the needs assessment conducted as required by title I of this Act of individuals with severe handicaps, as such assessment identifies the need for supported employment services, including the coordination and use of the information within the State relating to section 618 (b) (3) of the Education of the Handicapped Act; and

(B) describe the quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with severe handicaps under this part, and specify the State's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 635 of this part;

(3) provide assurances that--

(A) an evaluation for each individual describes training and traditionally time-limited post-employment services leading to supported employment;

(B) an individualized written rehabilitation program as required by section 102 has been developed outlining the services to be provided;

(C) such services will be provided in accordance with such program or a program specified under subsection (b) (3) (D) of this part;

(D) such services will be coordinated with the evaluation results, the individual written rehabilitation plan or education plan as required under section 102 of the Act, section 123 of the Developmental Disabilities Act of 1984, and sections 612(4) and 614(5) of the Education of the Handicapped Act, respectively;

(E) the State will conduct periodic reviews of the progress of individuals assisted under this part to determine whether services provided to such individuals should be continued, modified, or discontinued; and

(F) the State will make maximum use of services from public agencies, private nonprofit organizations, and other appropriate resources in the community to carry out this part;

(4) demonstrate evidence of collaboration by and funding from relevant State agencies and private nonprofit organizations to assist in the provision of supported employment services;

(5) provide assurances that all designated State agencies will expend not more than 5 percent of the State's allotment under this part for administrative costs for carrying out this part; and

(6) contain such other information and be submitted in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require.

SERVICES; AVAILABILITY AND COMPARABILITY

SEC. 635. (a) (1) Services available under this part may include but are not limited to an evaluation of rehabilitation potential, the provision of skilled job trainers who accompany the worker for intensive on-the-job training, systematic training, job development, follow-up services (including regular contact with the employer, trainee, and the parents or guardian), and consistent with subsection (b) regular observation or supervision of the individual with severe handicaps at the training site and other services needed to support the individual in employment.

(2) The evaluation of rehabilitation potential authorized by paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be supplementary to the evaluation of rehabilitation potential provided under title I of this Act.

(b) Services authorized under this part are limited to training and traditionally time-limited post-employment services leading to supported employment. Extended supported employment services shall be provided by the relevant State agencies and private organizations as specified under section 634 (b) (4) of this part or any other available source.

(c) Services provided under this part shall be complementary to services provided under title I of this Act.

RESTRICTION

SEC. 636. Each designated State agency shall collect the client information required by section 13 of this Act separately for supported employment clients under this part and for supported employment clients under title I.

SAVINGS PROVISION

SEC. 637. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit a State from conducting or from carrying out training and traditionally time-limited post-employment services leading to supported employment in accordance with the State plan submitted under section 101 from its State allotment under section 110.

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 638. (a) There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this part $25,000,000 for the fiscal year 1987, $26,470,000 for the fiscal year 1988, $28,060,000 for the fiscal year 1989, $29,730,000 for the fiscal year 1990, and $30,949,000 for fiscal year 1991.

(b) (1) The amendment adding section 634 (a) (made by subsection (a) of this section) shall not apply in any fiscal year in which the appropriation for part C of title VI of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 doe not equal or exceed $5,000,000.

(2) The provisions of paragraph (1) are repealed on September 30, 1990.

Attachment V

1986 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII, Part B: Centers for Independent Living

REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

AS AMENDED THROUGH OCTOBER 21, 1986
BY PUBLIC LAW 99-506

TITLE VII -- COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

PART B -- CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

GRANT PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

SEC. 711. (a) The Commissioner may make grants to any designated State unit which administers the State plan under section 705 to provide for the establishment and operation of independent living centers, which shall be facilities offering the services described in subsection (c) (2).

(b) No grant may be made under this section unless an application therefor has been submitted to and approved by the Commissioner. The Commissioner may not approve an application for a grant unless the application--

(1) contains assurances that the designated State unit will use funds provided by such grant in accordance with subsection (c);

(2) contains such other information, and is submitted in such form and in accordance with such procedures, as the Commissioner may require; **and**

(3) contains assurances that each center will have a board which is composed of a majority of handicapped individuals[1].

(c) An application by a public or nonprofit agency or organization of such grant shall--

(1) provide assurances that individuals **with handicaps** will be substantially involved in policy direction and management of such center, and will be employed by such center;

(2) contain assurances that the independent living center to be assisted by such grant shall offer individuals **with handicaps** a combination of independent living services, including as appropriate--

(A) intake counseling to determine the client's need for specific rehabilitation services;

(B) referral and counseling services with respect to attendant care;

(C) counseling and advocacy services with respect to legal and economic rights and benefits;

(D) independent living skills, counseling, and training, including such programs as training in the maintenance of necessary equipment and in jobseeking skills, counseling on therapy needs and programs, and special programs, for the blind and deaf;

---

[1] This shall take effect one year after the date of enactment of P.L. 99-506.

(E) housing, **recreation** and transportation referral and assistance;

(F) surveys, directories, and other activities to identify appropriate housing, **recreational opportunities** and accessible transportation, and other support services;

(G) health maintenance programs;

(H) peer counseling;

(I) community group living arrangements;

(J) education and training necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities;

(K) individual and group social and recreational **services;**

(L) other programs designed to provide resources, training, counseling, services, or other assistance of substantial benefit in promoting the independence, productivity, and quality of life of individuals **with handicaps;**

(M) attendant care and training or personnel to provide such care; and

(N) such other services as may be necessary and not inconsistent with the provisions of this title;

(3) contain a description of an evaluation plan which at the end of each year of a funding cycle shall reflect at a minimum the following--

(A) the numbers and types of individuals **with handicaps** assisted;

(B) the extent to which individuals with varying handicapping conditions were served;

(C) the types of services provided;

(D) the source of funding;

(E) the percentage of resources committed to each type of service provided;

(F) how services provided contributed to the maintenance of or the increased independence of individuals **with handicaps** assisted;

(G) the extent to which individuals **with handicaps** participate in management and decisionmaking in the center;

(H) the extent of capacity building activities including collaboration with other agencies and organizations;

(I) the extent of catalytic activities to promote community awareness, involvement, and assistance;

(J) the extent of outreach efforts and the impact of such efforts; and

(K) a comparison, when appropriate, of prior year(s) activities with most recent year activities.

(4) contain such other information, and be submitted in such form and in accordance with such procedures, as the Commissioner may require.

(d) If, within **three months** after the date in each fiscal year on which the Commissioner begins to accept applications from designated State units under this section, a designated State unit in a State has not submitted such an application, the Commissioner may accept applications for grants under this section from local public agencies or private nonprofit organizations within such State. After the receipt of such applications, the Commissioner may make grants to such agencies or organizations for the purpose of establishing independent living centers to provide the services described in subsection (c) (2).

(e) (1) The Commissioner shall, not later than February 1, 1985 develop and publish standards for evaluation consistent with the provisions in subparagraph (c) (3) to assist each independent living center receiving funding under this title to review and evaluate the operation of its center. **Such standards shall be revised as necessary, subject to paragraph (4) of this subsection.**

(2) The Commissioner shall, under the authority specified in section 14 of this Act, conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Centers for Independent Living Grant Program, and submit a report no later than February 1, 1986, to Congress on the evaluation, including recommendations for the improvement and continuation of each grantee and for the support of new independent living centers. In conducting the comprehensive evaluation, the Commissioner shall apply standards for evaluation which are consistent with the standards required in paragraph (1).

(3) In developing standards for evaluation to be used by the grantees, and in developing the standards for evaluation to be used in the comprehensive evaluation, the Commissioner shall obtain and consider recommendations for such standards from national organizations representing individuals **with handicaps** and independent living programs; and from independent living centers, professionals serving individuals **with handicaps,** and individuals, associations, and organizations engaged in research in independent living.

(4) No standards may be established under this subsection unless the standards are approved by the National Council on the Handicapped. The Council shall approve the standards within ninety days after receiving the standards. If the Secretary of Education has not received notification of approval or disapproval from the Council within the ninety days, the standards shall be deemed approved. A Council decision on such standards shall occur at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Council, and shall be the result of a simple majority of those present at the meeting.

(f) (1) By July 1, 1988, the Commissioner shall publish in the Federal Register in final form indicators of what constitutes minimum compliance consistent with the evaluation standards under subsection (e) (1).

(2) Each grantee shall report to the Commissioner at the end of each project year the extent to which the grantee is in compliance with evaluation standards, beginning with fiscal year 1989.

(3) By the end of fiscal year 1991, the Commissioner shall have conducted on-site compliance reviews of at least one-third of the grantees receiving funding under this part in fiscal year 1987. The Commissioner shall conduct on-site compliance review of at least 15 percent of grantees annually in subsequent years. Selection of grantees for compliance reviews shall be on a

random basis. The Commissioner shall use the indicators of the evaluation standards in determining compliance. At least one member of an on-site compliance review shall be a non-Federal employee with experience or expertise in the provision of independent living services.

(4) Beginning with the annual report to Congress for fiscal year 1990 and in subsequent years, the Commissioner shall include an analysis of the extent to which grantees have complied with the evaluation standards. The Commissioner may identify individual grantees in the analysis. In addition, the Commissioner shall report the results of on-site compliance reviews identifying individual grantees.

(g) (1) (A) From sums appropriated for the purposes of this section for fiscal year 1990, an amount which is 90 percent of the amount appropriated for fiscal year 1989 shall be available only for grantees receiving assistance in fiscal year 1989.

(B) The Secretary shall ensure that grants are made under subparagraph (A) only to Centers that meet the evaluation standards and shall make a determination concerning the termination, modification, or renewal of each grant on the basis of such evaluation.

(C) A grant under subparagraph (A) may not be less than 90 percent or more than 100 percent of the grant to the Center for fiscal year 1989. The Commissioner shall determine the amount of each grant on the basis of--

(i) the capacity of the recipient to obtain local resources to pay the non-Federal share of the cost of the Center; and

(ii) the economic conditions in the community to be served by the Center.

(2) To the extent funds are available under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall award grants to new Centers located in unserved geographic areas. Grants to new Centers shall be awarded on a competitive basis.

(3) For fiscal year 1991 and for any subsequent fiscal year, new grant awards shall be made on a competitive basis and shall include consideration of past performance, where appropriate.

(4) (A) Each grant recipient receiving assistance under this section in fiscal year 1986 shall continue to receive assistance through September 30, 1987, unless the Commissioner determines that the grant recipient is not in compliance with the provisions of the approved application of the grant recipient.

(B) Grant recipients continuing to receive assistance on the basis of the review described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall be evaluated by the Commissioner using standards described in subsection (e) and (f) of this section. Each such grant recipient shall continue to receive assistance for 3 years unless the Commissioner determines that the grantee is not substantially in compliance with such standards and with the provisions of the approved application of the grant recipient.

(h) In approving applications under this section, the Commissioner shall give priority to the geographic areas among the States which are currently not served or underserved by independent living centers.

Attachment VI

CARF Standards for Supported Employment

EXCERPTED FROM: 1991 Standards Manual for Organizations Serving People
With Disabilities, CARF.

M. Supported Employment

Program Description

Supported Employment programs assist persons with disabilities who require the provision of on-going support, both on and off the job, which is not time-limited to choose, obtain, and retain paid employment in integrated settings.

Transitional employment (See Glossary of Terms) is a variant of Supported Employment. Such programs may be included in this section.

1. The design and implementation of the program provides opportunities for optimal integration of the person with a disability into the work environment that is consistent with industry practices. This integration should result in the presence and participation of persons served in natural proportions (See Glossary of Terms) in both work and nonwork activities.

   Supported Employment programs should include the following activities:

   a. Opportunities for work site integration should be promoted during the organization's marketing and job-development activities within the industry.

   b. Integration at the work site should be promoted through social interaction, physical proximity, participation in social activities available to all employees, and opportunities for supervision from nonprogram staff.

2. The organization should develop a written policy which guides the development of its Supported Employment program to determine the size and composition of the work sites. This policy should be based upon the organization's own values. Factors to be considered include numbers of people without disabilities, preference of persons served, and opportunities for interaction with people without disabilities.

3. Integration in job-related social activities should be facilitated.

4. The organization should encourage the presence and participation of persons served in their communities.

5. Whenever possible, the person should travel to and from work using generic forms of community transportation; e.g., carpools, coworkers, self, or public transportation. If such transportation cannot be arranged, the organization should coordinate or provide available transportation.

6. Organizations involved in the transportation of people and/or materials provided by the organization should meet the standards in Section 1-I.14 through 1-I.22.

7. The organization should define the selection process for persons to be served in Supported Employment. The organization must demonstrate that all persons served, without regard to the severity of their disability, should have access to its Supported Employment program.

8. The organization should assist the person served to understand the impact of employment on disability benefits as well as other benefits and assist him/her to become knowledgeable about access to such benefits.

9. Persons served should be informed of supported employment options and of policies regarding transfer and reentry.

10. Each person should have an individual written plan that, at a minimum, includes:

    a. An assessment of the person's performance in the actual work site, including attention to environmental factors in order to determine:

        (1) Individual interests and preferences.

        (2) Work skills.

        (3) Functional skills.

        (4) Behavioral functioning.

    b. Short- and long-term support needed, including necessary financial resources.

    c. Wage range for the job.

    d. Best job match.

    e. Optimum integration and independence.

    f. Utilization of generic integrated community resources to meet nonwork needs.

    g. Career options.

    h. Follow-along services.

11. The person's plan for services in the Supported Employment program should be reviewed at least semiannually.

12. A documented system should be in place to provide organized follow-along support contacts at regular intervals with the person served. As appropriate, contact at regular intervals should made with the employer and significant others.

13. The person's potential for regular competitive employment should be assessed at least semiannually.

14. Persons accepted for Supported Employment and awaiting placement, or persons needing another placement, should have their plans reviewed every 30 days. Consultation should occur with the person served, other appropriate professional staff, and/or the referral source to determine if the plan should be amended.

15. The program evaluation system in a Supported Employment program should address a variety of measures, some of which should be:

    a. Average number of weeks worked.

    b. Average number of hours worked per week.

    c. Earnings and benefits.

    d. Job retention.

    e. Job advancement.

    f. Job changes.

    g. Length of time from referral to placement.

    h. Type and amount of staff intervention.

    i. Integration.

    j. Number of successful placements, classified by severity of disability.

16. The program should maintain, as appropriate, close communication with the family and others who are likely to influence the probability of a successful outcome.

17. When the organization provides supervision and training at the work site, the supervisor or trainer should be knowledgeable of the type of work of the assignment. Provisions for supervision at the work site should be specified for both immediate supervisors of the person served in the case of emergencies and supervision for planned absences as well. The information should be communicated to appropriate parties in writing.

18. Sound and acceptable pricing practices should be observed in all business and industrial activities, including purchase of materials, sale of products, and subcontracting for all service approaches for supported employment including individual, group, and other strategies.

19. The trainer or supervisor should be knowledgeable in the rehabilitation techniques appropriate to the persons served and should have the capacity to assure adequate performance.

20. The organization should define and provide for the orientation and on-going training needs for staff of the Supported Employment program which should include some of the following:

    a. Introduction to disability

    b. Philosophy of the organization in such areas as personal dignity, family interactions, and participation in community life

    c. Individual rights and how to assist persons to secure and exercise those rights

    d. Achieving community integration

    e. Positive training and support

    f. Confidentiality

    g. Conflict resolution

    h. Prevention/reporting of neglect and abuse

    i. Functional skills training

    j. Characteristics of persons served; e.g., means of communication, required degree of supervision, guardianship, special needs, medications, general health

    k. Incident reporting

    l. Social skills training

    m. Communication and active listening skills

    n. Documentation and recordkeeping

    o. Behavior management practices

21. The design and implementation of the program should reflect close cooperation between the organization and significant elements; e.g., employers, unions, community resources, persons served, advocates, etc. This cooperation may be accomplished in part by the use of a business advisory council.

22. A written service agreement between the organization and the employer should specify, at a minimum, the following:

    a. Roles and responsibilities of each party over time
    b. Compensation
    c. Insurance and other benefits
    d. Hiring decisions
    e. Conditions for amendment or termination of the service agreement
    f. Appropriate confidentiality related to persons employed

23. The person(s) served should be informed of the conditions of the service agreement.

24. In conjunction with the industry, the following job site training functions should be provided in writing:

    a. Job specifications and/or task analysis
    b. A systematic plan of instruction and/or support in work skills and behaviors to be acquired
    c. A plan to develop appropriate social and interpersonal skills necessary to retain employment
    d. Where appropriate, a plan to transfer supervision and/or support from the organization to the business or industry

25. There should be clear lines of communication between program staff and appropriate individuals in the work site to sustain mutually beneficial services as indicated in the service agreement.

26. The work and the work site should reflect an awareness of sound health and safety practices. Provisions for meeting safety and health standards should apply uniformly to all persons.

27. Health and other special considerations should be taken into account in the work placement of persons served. Such considerations as well as emergency contact number(s) and procedures should be clearly communicated in writing to supervisory personnel.

28. Work sites should be appropriately accessible to the people referred.

29. All persons should have equal opportunity to use appropriate equipment. As part of reasonable accommodation, there should be modified equipment, jigs and fixtures, and other techniques, as necessary to increase the person's productivity rate, assure greater safety in equipment use, and enhance earning potential. Other forms of accommodation may include, but not be limited to: modification of the work site and commonly used surrounding areas; purchase of assistive aids and devices; adoption of personnel policies which allow the use of extended rest periods, flextime, parttime, etc.; reassignment of nonessential tasks; and task training.

30. Prevailing competitive wage rates should be sought for the person served prior to consideration of subminimum wage certificates. A person paid less than minimum wage should be covered by a Department of Labor certificate, as applicable.

31. Where subminimum wages are paid there should be industrial norms based on the average productivity of nonjobhandicapped workers in the same workplace performing similar jobs, as established by an accepted system of work measurement such as time studies, Methods-Time-Measurement, MODAPTS, etc.

32. Persons served in Supported Employment should be compensated using the principle of commensurate wages.

33. The person who is paid and/or above the prevailing wage on a consistent basis, and who meets all other criteria for regular competitive employment, should be classified as an employee and should receive usual employee benefits.

34. Wage rates and production norms should be reviewed and adjusted whenever the methods of performing a work task are changed.

35. Each person's wages and work performance should be reviewed at least every six months.

36. Wage payments should be based on a system of individual performance rather than pooled and/or group wage payments.

37. Wage payments should be of a monetary nature and not payments in-kind.

38. The pay period should not exceed 31 calendar days.

39. Each person should receive a written statement for each pay period indicating gross pay, hours worked, deductions, and net pay.

40. Wages paid each person should be in full for all work performed during the period. Persons engaged in the production of products or the provision of services should not have wage payments delayed because they are contingent upon subsequent sales or payments.

41. There should be no charge to the person for the privilege of employment per se. There may, however, be appropriate charges for transportation, uniforms, meals, and lodging; an invoice should be submitted to the person served, the legal guardian, or a third-party sponsor.

42. When the organization generates the payroll check, the following records and information should be maintained:

    a. Employee identification data

    b. The name and address of the personal representative, conservator, guardian, and/or representative payee, if one has been appointed for the employee

    c. Work history

    d. Pertinent information about the job assignments

    e. Employment application

    f. Emergency contact number

    g. Attendance records

    h. Payroll records

43. For all persons served, the organization should maintain the following records and information:

    a. The name of the work supervisor

    b. The rate of pay, earnings, and fringe benefits

    c. The date of employment

    d. Information on work progress

    e. Information on performance review, when possible

    f. Special work considerations

    g. Employer termination report(s), when possible

    h. Emergency contact number(s)

    i. Immigration/naturalization status

44. If the organization generates the payroll check, the program should prepare a handbook which is presented to the person served in a manner that is understandable to that person and which is periodically reviewed, outlining:

   a. The conditions, benefits, and responsibilities of each party.

   b. Fringe benefits.

   c. Wage payment practices.

   d. Work rules.

   e. Nondiscrimination provisions.

   f. Grievance and appeal procedures.

45. The program should adopt a policy with regard to struck work and the placement of persons in businesses being struck.

Attachment VII

Directory of State Administrators of State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, as of August 19, 1991

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as of 08/19/91

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